■ **Super / D1**

The Brad-Jen split: No, can't be, one big aww, people

■ **Sat. Special / A5-4**

Now on its 16th season, 'The Simpsons' still irreverent, witty, loved

■ **Sports / A25**

Jayvie Agojo pulls off dramatic RP Ladies Open victory

■ **World / A10**

Prince Charles orders son Harry to visit Auschwitz, British tabloid reports

■ **Elan / C4**

Damiani, Italy's top jewelry brand comes to Manila

Congress wants to shift tax burden to big business

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Cynthia D. Balana

EVEN politics plays a big role in determining who should pay more taxes.

Apparently wary of the possible political backlash from their constituents who stand to bear the brunt of higher taxes, congressmen

CONGRESS/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

Estrada defends GMA on impeachment raps

By Michael Lim Ubac and Cynthia D. Balana

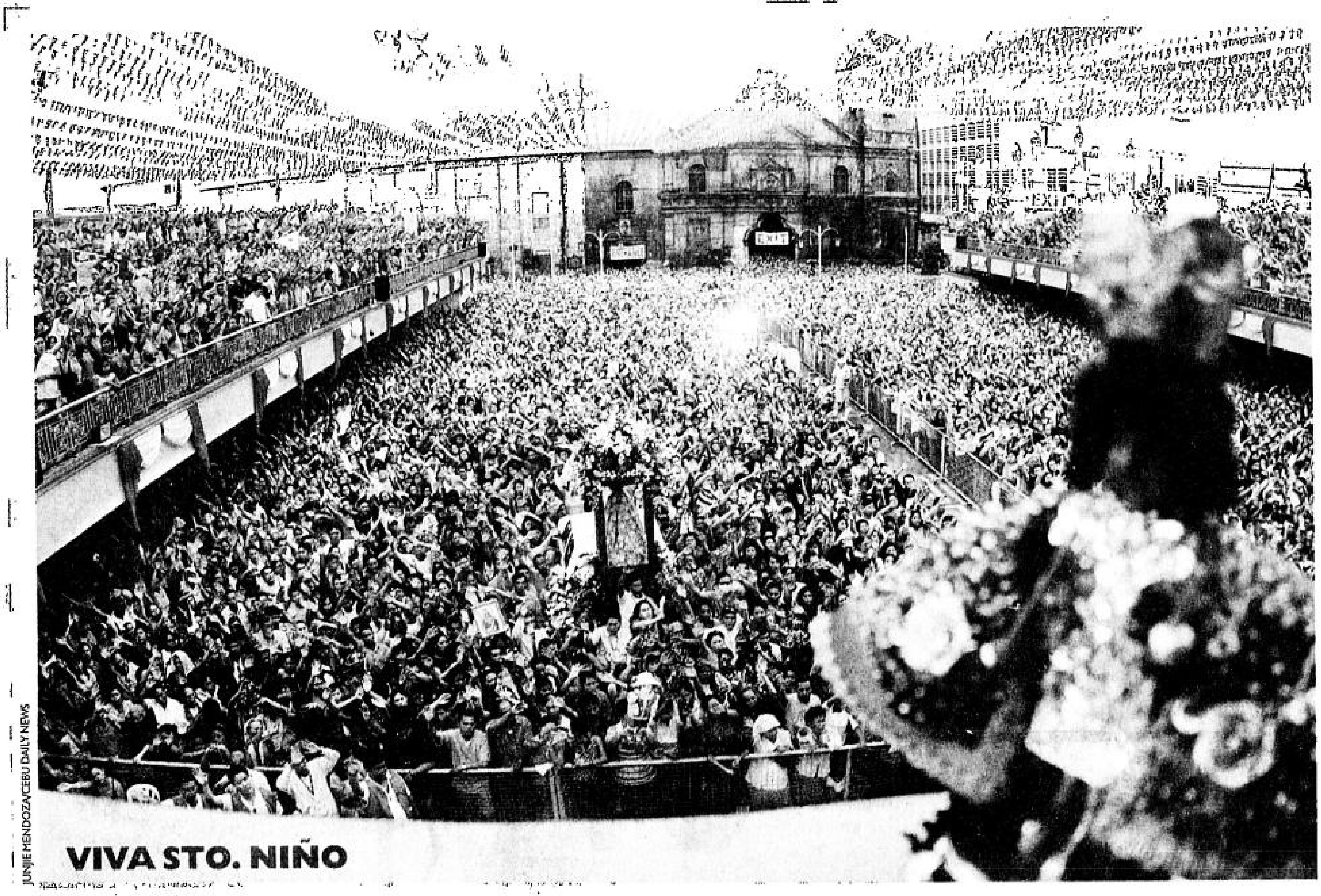
NOW, former President Joseph Estrada is singing a different tune—and its lyrics may not be the kind ex-Sen. Jovito Salonga would want to hear.

In a rare gesture, Estrada yesterday defended the woman who ousted him from

ESTRADA/ A22

email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph Saturday, January 15, 2005 ★★★ 84 pages / 13 sections / Vol. 20 / No. 38 P18 website: www.inq7.net

Erap to unify GMA foes



JUNJIE MENDOZA/CEBU DAILY NEWS

Devotees of the Sto. Niño fill up to overflowing the cavernous Pilgrim Center of the Basilica de Sto. Niño in Cebu during a dawn Mass on Friday. They hold up their images of the Child Jesus and Our Lady of Guadalupe to be blessed. The religious rites, including a fluvial procession early this morning, usher in the feast of the Sto.Nino on Sunday.

People's assemblies launched

By Armand Nocum and Carlito Pablo

SAYING he had a new lease on life, deposed President Joseph Estrada vowed to organize a "united opposition" on his return home today.

"God gave me renewed strength. That is why I'm determined to fight for the truth in the country and put to realization what my friend (Fernando Poe Jr.) had fought for," he said, referring to his late actor-friend who challenged President Macapagal-Arroyo in the May elections.

Estrada said he wanted the Filipino people to see that he would fight for their interest until his dying breath.

Asked about supposed talks of revolution, Estrada replied: "Before, they were saying I would flee justice; now that I am returning, they are saying I would wage a revolution."

Estrada made his vow as prominent opposition figures launched a series of so-called "consultative assemblies" with people at the grass roots, bolstered by surveys showing that Ms Arroyo's approval ratings had plummeted to a record level and amid warnings that she faced turbulent days ahead.

Opposition leaders identified with Poe and Estrada kicked off the "multi-sectoral pulong bayan" Thursday evening at a barangay in the opposition bailiwick Makati. It is to be followed with similar gatherings in other areas in and outside Metro Manila.

"Definitely not," House Minority Leader Rep. Francis Es-

ERAP/ A21

Security raises worry Erap might go Ninoy's way

By Cynthia Balana, Christine O. Avendaño and Christian Esguerra

"EXTREME paranoia," Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. called the security preparation for the return today at 12:30 p.m. of deposed President Joseph Estrada.

The country's top cop Philippine National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay himself said yesterday that he would personally meet Estrada at the airport to ensure his safety.

The PNP has placed some 15,200 policemen on full alert today with at least 10,000 of them deployed to provide route and area security for Estrada's convoy from the airport, according to National Capital Region Police Office Director Avelino Razon.

With all that security on hand, or precisely because of it, Estrada and opposition leaders are worried about a possible assassination attempt on his life, according to former Maguindanao Rep. Didagen Dilangalen.

For one, government authorities reportedly insist on a plan for him to disembark at the tarmac of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport, said Dilangalen.

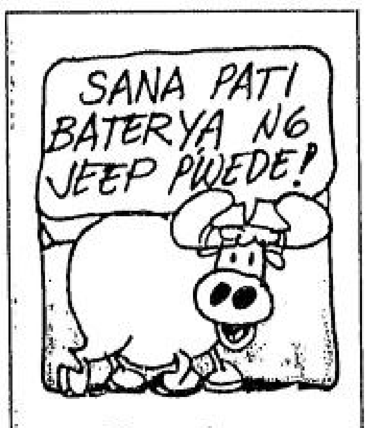
"*Baka mag-Ninoy sa tarmac* (There might be a Ninoy incident at the tarmac)," Dilangalen told reporters at the House of Representatives. He was referring to the killing of former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr. at the tarmac of the Naia shortly upon his arrival from Taiwan on Aug. 21, 1983. Aquino was secured by a contingent of 2,000 military officers and men.

Dilangalen noted similarities in the Aquino-Estrada homecoming: Aquino boarded a China Airlines flight while Estrada will be flying via Philippine Airlines from Hong Kong, China.

Also, he said Aquino arrived at 1 p.m., close to Estrada's expected time of arrival. Both had undergone major operations abroad.

"Erap wanted the normal procedures wherein he would pass through the tube, then proceed to the presidential waiting area from where he would be brought to Villamor Air Base, and motor or fly by chopper to

SECURITY/ A21



SANA PATI BATERYA NG JEEP PWEDE!

Coming: Shirts that recharge cell phones

TORONTO—It may only be a matter of time before we will be using our shirts to charge our cell phones.

Researchers at the University of Toronto have invented a flexible plastic solar cell that is said to be five times more efficient than current methods in converting energy from the sun into electrical energy.

COMING/ A22

Inquirer, ABS-CBN banned inside HK hotel

By Armand N. Nocum

HONG KONG—He not only barred the INQUIRER from his apartment in Hong Kong's luxury Parkview hotel. He also said this newspaper might have a taste of what the giant network ABS-CBN got.

Then he burst into laughter.

And between bursts of laughter, former President Joseph Estrada even quoted Voltaire.

Estrada was apparently stung by an INQUIRER story—based on an official report by his police escorts—about his high living and his meeting with his former Cabinet ministers in his posh flat at the Parkview hotel after his knee surgery.

"*Baka kayo sumunod sa* ABS-CBN (You may be next to ABS-CBN). You have been sowing disinformation for so long now," he said. Then he gave a hearty laugh.

Still unidentified persons on Tuesday set fire to the ABS-CBN OB van in Mandaluyong. Later, somebody sent media offices an e-mail saying they were supporters of Fernando Poe Jr. and they were protesting ABS-CBN's alleged unfair reporting during the presidential campaign last year.

Estrada made the remark in a telephone interview with the INQUIRER reporter, who was then talking to him from the parking lot of the 38-floor Tower No. 18 of the luxury hotel at the Tai Tam Country Park, a mountain resort 30-minutes away from downtown Hong Kong.

The INQUIRER reporter had asked if he could join Estrada in his apartment to escape the cold (6 to 7 degrees Celsius) weather in the wind-swept parking lot.

By the time this reporter made the call, he had been waiting for about four hours

INQUIRER/ A21

ERAP REDUX: New knees, new fears, new lease on life, old refrains, the familiar plaints. AFP

SC stops Piatco collection of $62M for Naia 3

By Philip C. Tubeza

THE SUPREME Court yesterday stopped a Pasay City judge from forcing the government to make a $62.34-million down payment to the Filipino-German consortium that built the expropriated Terminal 3 of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport.

"Considering the allegations contained, the issues raised and the arguments adduced in the petition, it is necessary and proper to issue the order," the high tribunal said in a temporary restraining order.

The high court ordered Pasay City Judge Henrick Gingoyon, his "agents, representatives, or persons acting in your place or stead, to cease and desist from implementing your orders."

It required Gingoyon and the Philippine International Air Terminals Co. (Piatco) to comment within a non-extendable period of 10 days on the petition filed on Thursday by Solicitor General Alfredo Benipayo asking the tribunal to overturn Gingoyon's ruling.

The court order suspends Gingoyon's Jan. 4 ruling ordering the government to hand over the funds from the Land Bank of the Philippines to the consortium that includes the German-based Fraport as partial payment for the terminal.

It also covers the judge's two other rulings, those of Jan. 7 and 10, creating a three-person panel to determine the final compensation for the disputed facility and prohibiting the government from "performing acts of ownership" like awarding concessions.

Reacting to the high court order, Malacañang said all parties to the dispute were duty-bound to follow the high court's order but said the government was determined to open the terminal.

"The Solicitor General will continue to pursue the interests of government and we are determined to open the airport terminal as a matter of national interest," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

Fraport is seeking $465 million for the terminal project, which President Macapagal-Arroyo wants to operate by June. The case is separately under international arbitration.

SC STOPS/ A8

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Northern Luzon and the eastern sections of Visayas and Mindano will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and isolated thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/01/15/05

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2005

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONTPAGE

Text us your feedback: inquirer news name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Cloudy with Rains	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Cloudy with Rains	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Lacag	Cloudy with Rains	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Partly Cloudy
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Partly Cloudy
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

Marcoses on NPA hit list–Ka Roger

LUCENA CITY—The Communist Party of the Philippines yesterday warned family members of deposed President Ferdinand Marcos that "revolutionary justice" would also be meted out to them sooner or later for their "martial law crimes" against the people.

CCP spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal issued the warning after New People's Army hit men assassinated former Quezon provincial police director Eduardo Sebastian on Wednesday.

"Some could be laughing behind our back because until now the Marcoses continue to remain scot-free, still flaunting their wealth and power. But just like Col. Sebastian, their own time will also come," Rosal said in a mobile phone interview.

He added: "At present, the Marcoses can still relish the fruits of their conjugal dictatorship. But that will not be forever. I assure them that sooner or later, we will also get them."

He said that the Marcoses and some of their "notorious cronies" had been sentenced with capital punishment by the CCP "people's court" in 1998. Rosal declined to give specific names.

Rosal said once a "people's court" ordered punishment against any accused after a trial, "the concerned NPA unit is mandated to execute the punishment."

"No matter how long it takes, the NPA is under obligation to carry out the punishment. And we have proven that several times in the past, the latest of which was Colonel Sebastian," he said.

Members of an NPA "Sparrow Unit" gunned down Sebastian, 61, on Wednesday inside his house in the outskirts of this city. The NPA said the retired police official and former Army intelligence officer had accumulated crimes "against the people and the revolutionary movement" even before the declaration of martial law up to his retirement in 1998.

However, Rosal admitted that carrying out punishment was not the priority of the communist guerrillas. "As always, our main focus and foremost concern is the fulfillment of our revolutionary task, how to expand and intensify the people's war against the government."

He said the order of the "people's court" would only be implemented if the concerned NPA unit had the time and opportunity to do so. "It would still depend on the elements of time and open opportunities to execute the order," he said.

Delfin T. Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

PDI PHOTO

ROSAL: Their own time will come.

SWS ON GNP

'Don't say economy is good when in fact it is not'

By Norman Bordadora

GROSS national product, which measures national income, is not a reliable gauge of a country's well-being, according to an analysis of the Social Weather Stations.

"Stop looking at the GNP," said SWS head Mahar Mangahas who gave a briefing yesterday on the SWS's analysis of the GNP as a measure of the country's well-being and the results of the polling firm's latest findings on the incidence of hunger and poverty in the Philippines.

"Don't say the economy is good when in fact it is not," added Mangahas, suggesting that the public should look at what people are feeling—whether or not they are hungry and whether they think they are poor or well-off.

'Maldistributive economy'

Mangahas said the Philippines has a "maldistributive economy," one that exhibits significant growth in GNP but is characterized by unabated hunger and poverty, progressive belt-tightening and reduced economic opportunities, particularly for the poor.

According to the latest SWS survey of December 2004, 11.5 percent of respondents said their family experienced hunger at least once during the last three months.

The survey said 9.1 percent said their family experienced moderate hunger while 2.2 percent said they experienced severe hunger.

Hunger experience

The respondents were asked the question: "In the last three months, did it happen even once that your family experienced hunger and not have anything to eat?"

If they answered yes, they were asked: "Did it happen only once, a few times, often or always?"

The SWS analysis noted that the Philippines' GNP—which measures the income of all Filipinos, both in and out of the country—has been increasing steadily by a range of between 4.1 percent and 6.5 percent from 2002 to 2004.

With the population increasing at just 2.3 percent annually, it would seem that production is growing faster than population.

Are things better?

"So aren't Filipinos in general getting better off?" asked Mangahas.

He answered his own question with an analysis of the government's Family Income and Expenditures Survey, which is done every three years by the National Statistics Office, showing that average real income per family has fallen despite the almost continuous increase in the GNP.

"From its 2003 FIES, the NSO reported as early as August 2004, that average real income per family fell by 10 percent from 2000, which strongly indicates that the poverty incidence was higher in 2003 than in 2000," Mangahas said.

The FIES was last done in 2003.

The SWS's December 2004 survey on self-rated poverty showed that 48 percent of Filipinos believe that they are poor, 35 percent believe they are "on the line" (neither poor nor not poor), and 17 percent believe that they are not poor.

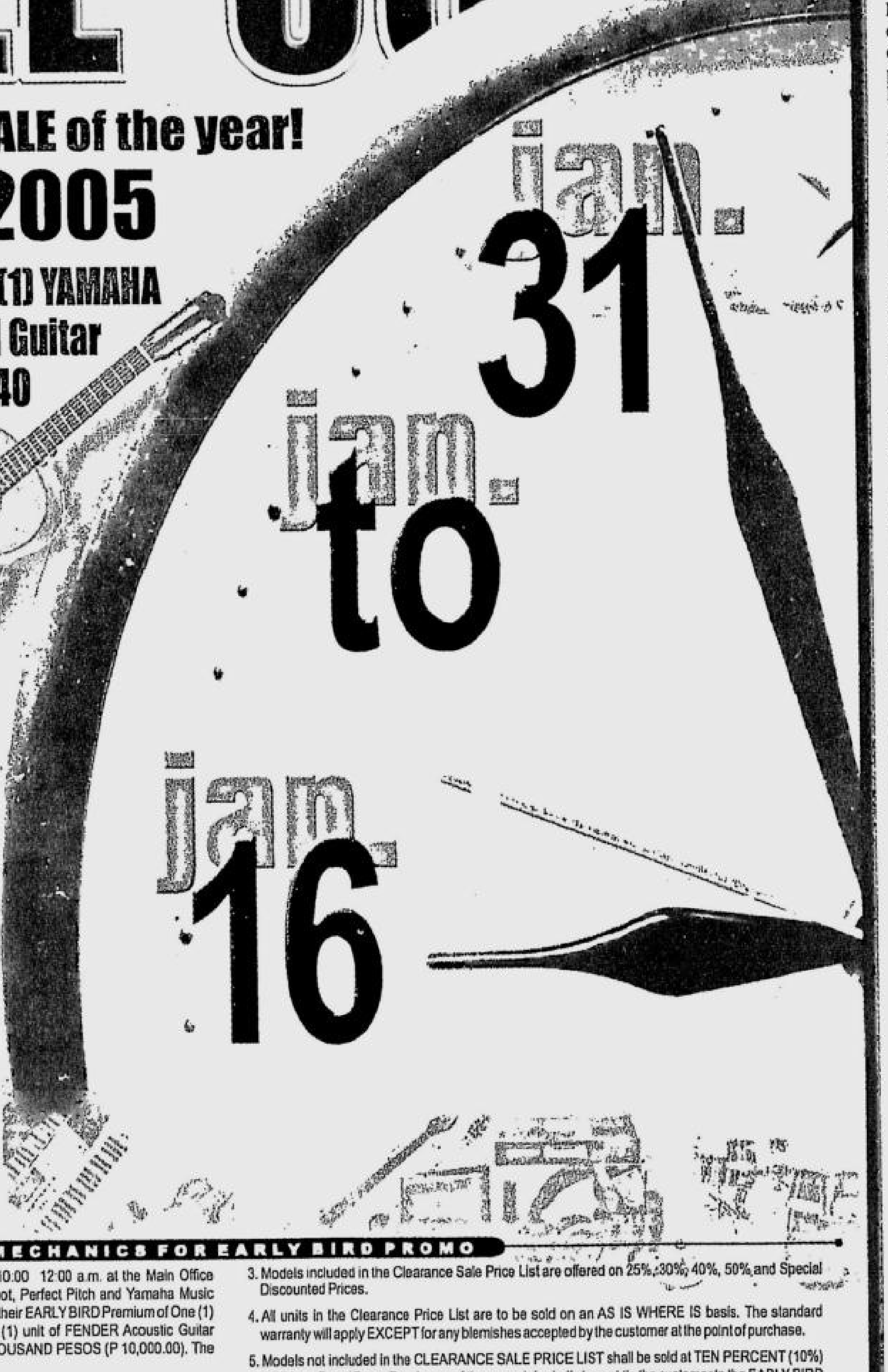
While the SWS recognizes that the self-rated poverty has declined recently, Mangahas said the self-rated poverty threshold of respondents has also declined.

Poverty threshold

To determine the poverty threshold of respondents, those who said they were poor were asked the question: "In your opinion, how much is the least in home expenses that your family would need each month in order not to be called poor anymore?"

Those who rated themselves poor in Metro Manila in December 2004 said they would need an average of P10,200; in other parts of Luzon, P5,000; in the Visayas, P5,000; and just P3,000 in Mindanao.

These thresholds are less than those given by the poor in Metro Manila in November 2003 which was P15,000; in other parts of Luzon, 10,000; in the Visayas, P9,000; and in Mindanao, P5,000.



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SANCTIONS, YES, SURRENDER, NO

MILF rejects 72-hour deadline

By Alcuin Papa

MORO rebels yesterday rejected a 72-hour deadline set by the government to surrender two rogue commanders who broke a truce by attacking a military outpost in Maguindanao on Jan. 8.

In a statement posted on its website, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) said it will impose sanctions on Ustadz Wahid Tundok and Abdulrahman Bides (Adziz Faizal, according to the military and Abdul Rahman Binago, according to earlier INQUIRER reports) but it will not turn them over to the government.

"The MILF will definitely punish those responsible for the attacks but turning them over to the government is out of the question," said Jun Mantawil, chair of MILF peace panel, in the statement.

He added: "This is an unfortunate turn of events particularly after the peace talks regained some ground with its resumption in Kuala Lumpur recently."

But Armed Forces of the Philippines spokesperson Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano said the military will hunt the two MILF commanders and treat them as ordinary criminals.

"With or without them surrendering, we will continue to undertake our law enforcement duties," Yano told reporters in Camp Aguinaldo.

"Our mandate is to hunt them down as plain criminals regardless of what their (MILF) action plan is. With or without the 72 hours, we just gave them the chance to voluntarily surrender their arms," said Yano.

On Sunday night, around 100 MILF rebels led by Tundok and Faizal attacked a detachment of the 37th Infantry Battalion in Linantagan, Mamasapano, Maguindanao. The firefight dragged on until Monday afternoon and left 15 Moro rebels and seven soldiers dead.

The MILF, fighting since 1969 for a separate Islamic state in Mindanao, said the rebel group would impose its own sanctions.

Sunday's fighting was the worst violence during the 17-month-old truce and came a few weeks before peace talks are due to resume on Feb. 1 in Kuala Lumpur, focusing on the issue of ancestral lands for about 4 million Muslims in Mindanao.

Malaysia has been brokering talks to end the 35-year-old Muslim separatist rebellion that has left at least 120,000 people dead, driven away foreign investment and stunted rural development in the resource-rich southern Philippines.

MILF spokesperson Eid Kabalu had said the attack was not sanctioned by the MILF leadership. The attack was reportedly triggered by the death of Bedis Binago, a brother of one of the leaders, who was killed on Jan. 7 in a clash with government troops in Palimbang, Sultan Kudarat.

Bedis Binago was allegedly a member of the Abu Sofiya kidnap-for-ransom group operating in Central Mindanao.

The joint GRP-MILF Coordinating Committee on the Cessation of Hostilities and the International Monitoring Team, the local and foreign bodies tasked to monitor compliance of a 2002 ceasefire signed by the two sides, had taken up the issue of the attack in their regular monthly meeting recently in Davao City. The IMT includes members from Brunei, Libya and Malaysia.

The Linantagan attack is just one of many breaches of the 2002 ceasefire, which was signed by the two sides in preparation for the formal peace negotiations.

Peace talks between the government and the MILF is set to resume in February in Kuala Lumpur. The Malaysian government is brokering the talks. *With Reuters report*

Correction

IN THE story "Power problems worry giant semiconductor firm" that appeared on Page B3 of the PDI's Business section on Jan. 12, the cost of the expansion project of Texas Instruments Philippines Inc. should have read P300 million, not (US dollars) $300 million.

* * *

Readers may send their requests for correction of factual errors in writing to Gerry Lirio, city editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, PDI Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Mascardo Street, Makati City; fax Nos. 897-4793/94; e-mail addresses:glirio@inquirer.com.ph and daydesk@inquirer.com.ph.

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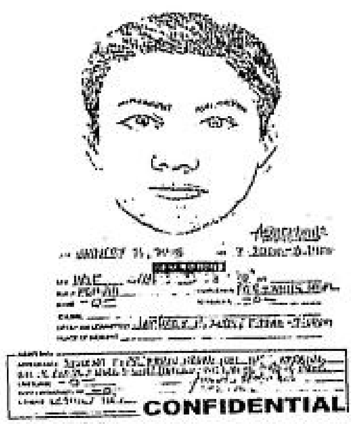
ABS-CBN VAN BURNING

Cashier remembers suspect's good looks

By Leila B. Salaverria



THE SUSPECT had dashing good looks.

This was why the cashier of the Internet cafe One Digital Place was able to provide a detailed description allowing investigators to come up with an artist's sketch of the suspect who sent the e-mail claiming responsibility for torching the ABS-CBN's OB van last Monday.

"*May dating daw yung* customer *kaya naalala niya yung itsura.* [The customer was dashing so she remembered his face]," agent Palmer Mallari of the National Bureau of Investigation's Anti-Fraud and Computer Crime Division (AFCCD) said yesterday.

The cashier described the suspect as between 24 to 30 years old, 5'8" to 5'10" tall, with fair skin. He looked like a student, with broad shoulders, shiny hair and a trim body. He probably works out, she added.

AFCCD head Elfren Meneses said the suspect entered One Digital Place located at the Shopping Center of the University of the Philippines campus in Diliman, Quezon City, at 8:30 a.m. on Monday, shortly after the place opened. He chose to use computer 13.

There were already other people in the cafe using computers 8 and 10.

Meneses said the time the suspect used computer 13 tallied with the time the e-mail alluding to the OB van attack was sent to GMA 7 which was at 9 a.m.

The e-mail message was sent from the address juandelacruz11105@yahoocom, which was created at 7:03 a.m., also on Monday, when the Internet cafe was still closed.

According to the NBI's autopsy of computer 13, the e-mail account was actually created on Jan. 10 American time, but in Philippine time, it was created at 7:03 a.m. on Jan. 11. The bureau would be examining this discrepancy and would be comparing the sketch with another drawing of a suspect who was allegedly with the group who threw a Molotov bomb at the ABS-CBN's OB van in Mandaluyong City.

Umali-Rueda; 74

AMPARO Umali-Rueda died yesterday in Manila. She was 74.

She is the mother of former INQUIRER reporter Nimfa Rueda who is now based in Long Beach, California.

Amparo Rueda is survived by husband, retired Col. Rafael Rueda, Jr.; children, Maria Josefina, Rafael III, Maximo, Edgardo, Edmundo, Ma. Nimfa, Ma. Corazon; and 15 grandchildren.

She was born on July 8, 1930, in Lipa, Batangas. Her remains lie at the Funeraria Paz, Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. On Sunday, at 2 p.m., her body will be brought to the Lipa Cathedral. Interment is scheduled on Jan. 18 at the Lipa Public Cemetery.

Tabaniag burial today

DR. ELISA Reyes Tabaniag of the UP College of Medicine Class 1942 and a retiree of the Manila Health Department died on Jan. 11 at the St. Luke's Medical Center. She was 85.

She is survived by husband Zacarias "Taby" Tabaniag of Fistorama and Filgolf Fame, and children Teresita and Kihie Ueda, Taby Jr. and Maricris, Zeng and Jun Alanon and Ramon, and grandchildren.

Interment is set today at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Parañaque City, after the 9 a.m. Mass at Arlington East in Pasig City.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Saturday, January 15, 2005
1st Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Heb 4:12-16
Gospel: Mark 2:13-17

When Jesus went out again beside the lake, a crowd came to him and he taught them. As he walked along, he saw a tax collector sitting in his office. This was Levi, the son of Alpheus. Jesus said to him, "Follow me." And Levi got up and followed him.

And it so happened that while Jesus was eating in Levi's house, tax collectors and sinners were sitting with him and his disciples for there were indeed many of them. But there were also teachers of the Law of the Pharisees' party, among those who followed Jesus, and when they saw him eating with sinners and tax collectors, they said to his disciples, "Why! He eats with tax collectors and sinners!"

Jesus heard them and answered, "Healthy people don't need a doctor, but sick people do. I did not come to call the righteous but sinners."

Commentary

Jesus alternates between preaching and healing and calling more disciples to join his company. Now it's Matthew, a minor tax collector, a public sinner who was in collusion with the Roman empire and so despised. But Jesus is delighted to go to a party with Matthew's other sinner-friends and when he is murmured against he responds as a prophet would: first eating with them (the first announcement of forgiveness given) and then telling everyone else that he's here to call the sick to his side, the sinners and not the healthy and the righteous.

And us—who do we think we are? Not bad, trying hard, slipping here and there, but basically OK? Or do we know, as any disciple does, that we are not what we put ourselves forth to be, but are in need of a doctor, someone to teach us how to live with one another and forgive us, again and again and again?

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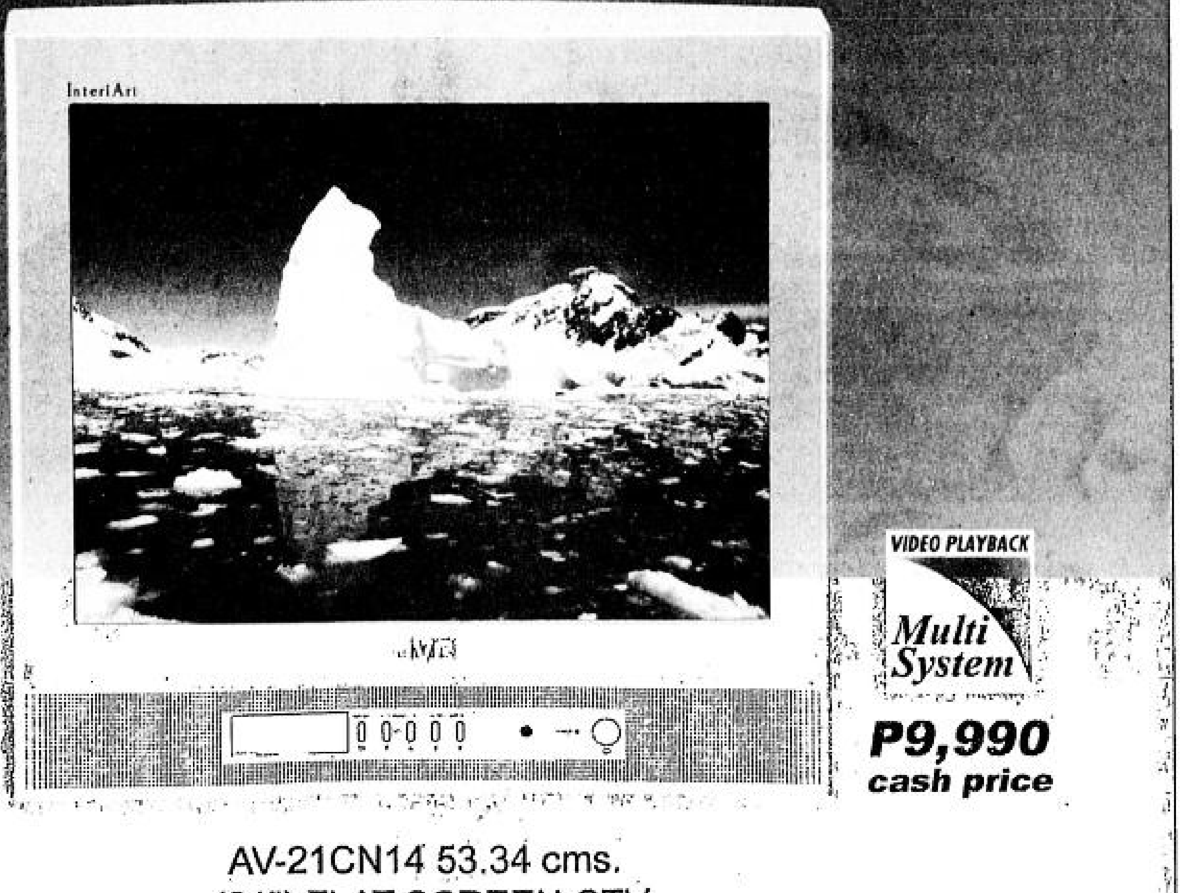

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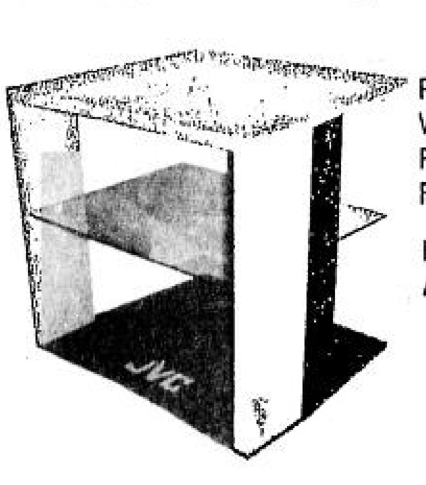

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Globe
HANDYPHONE

DOLE RULING ON LUISITA CASE

Union execs fired for illegal strike

By Blanche S. Rivera

THE CENTRAL Azucarera de Tarlac Labor Union (Catlu) suffered a big blow yesterday as the government ordered the dismissal of its officials for staging an illegal strike and misleading its members on the legality of the work stoppage.

The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) yesterday handed down its decision on the controversial labor dispute involving Hacienda Luisita in the hope of ending two months of stand-off between the Central Azucarera de Tarlac (CAT) management and workers.

In a 10-page resolution, Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas ordered the CAT management to immediately pay its workers their unpaid salaries and effect wage adjustments covering the fourth and fifth years of their collective bargaining agreement.

The DOLE approved a P15 daily wage hike for the workers and a "one-time lump sum" of P12,500 for each covered employee. The DOLE did not make any reference to the P30,000 signing bonus sought by the Catlu.

In effect, the DOLE said each mill worker would receive an additional P14,840 outside their unpaid salaries, covering a wage adjustment retroactive to July 1 last year.

HACIENDA Luisita workers hold protest rally in Mendiola near Malacañang to demand justice for strikers killed during a violent dispersal.

ERIK ARAZAS

"CAT shall immediately pay the unpaid wages and other benefits due the striking workers which were accrued by them prior to the strike," Sto. Tomas said.

The Catlu, representing the sugar mill workers in Hacienda Luisita, went on strike on Nov. 6 last year after CBA negotiations bogged down.

The Catlu had demanded a P100 daily wage hike, P30,000 signing bonus, and a retirement package at double the monthly wage, but the management offered only a P12 wage hike and a P12,000 signing bonus.

The picket at Hacienda Luisita turned violent late last year after striking workers clashed with police and military personnel. Seven people were killed and scores were injured during the violence.

Sto. Tomas also ordered striking members of the Catlu to report to work within five days from the time the parties received their copies of the DOLE decision.

The CAT management, on the other hand, was directed to accept the Catlu members "without retaliatory action."

All Catlu officers, however, were dismissed for the illegal strike except for union director Jessie P. Manliclic, who followed the DOLE order and returned to work on Nov. 14.

The DOLE said that except for the submission of a notice of strike, the Catlu did not comply with the other mandatory requirements for staging a strike.

Sto. Tomas also expressed confidence that she would eventually be vindicated in the criminal and administrative charges filed against her and other government officials by workers of Hacienda Luisita.

She maintained that the DOLE was "never remiss" on its responsibility to resolve the labor issue at Hacienda Luisita.

Tarlac sugar planters move to save crops

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Planters in Tarlac are rushing negotiations to mill some 600,000 tons of sugarcane in this Pampanga capital city to save their crops from rotting.

This came on the heels of a labor conflict that led to the temporary closure of Central Azucarera de Tarlac (CAT) at the Cojuangco family-owned Hacienda Luisita.

"We have no other choice. We need some relief. The canes might rot," Vice Gov. Marcelino Aganon, president of the Central Azucarera de Tarlac Planters Cooperative, said yesterday.

The CATPC, the biggest cooperative in Tarlac, has 1,600 planters cultivating sugarcane in some 8,000 hectares outside of the Luisita estate.

Negotiations between the Luisita management and two unions of farm workers over wages and benefits bogged down in October just as the milling season was starting.

Aganon said the Pasudeco (Pampanga Sugar Development Co.) Cooperative Marketing Association (PCMA) is helping the CATPC convince the milling company BaseCom here to extend operations until June. Milling in Pampanga, where 10,000 ha are planted to sugarcane, usually ends in March.

Agapito Espinoza, PCMA manager, said his group was not opposed to the plan so long as sugarcane from Pampanga were milled first and the mill's operations were not disrupted.

BaseCom, he said, has accommodated milling requests from Tarlac planters outside of CATPC.

Aganon also said that unless President Macapagal-Arroyo would undertake extra-legal measures and take over the operations of the strike-torn CAT, Tarlac's P2-billion sugar industry would collapse.

They would not be any sugarcane harvest next year and, consequently, no sugar supply the following year. Estimated losses had run up to P1.4 billion, he said.

Reiterating the appeal they made Thursday before the joint public hearing of the House committees on labor and human rights looking into the Hacienda Luisita controversy, Aganon said they had lost so much because "we are a third-party victim" to the ongoing labor dispute at the CAT. *Tonette Orejas and Jo Martinez-Clemente, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

Top Metro cop scores 'bogus' raid on Islamic center

By Christian V. Esguerra

FINALLY, a top police official has come out in the open to castigate officers behind the allegedly bogus raid of the Islamic Information Center in Manila that resulted in the arrest of 17 suspected terrorists last week.

Director Avelino Razon Jr., National Capital Region Police Office chief, yesterday issued a statement warning policemen "to be careful and responsible enough in the conduct of warrantless arrests and searches."

"Protection and observance of human rights of the citizenry should be a primordial concern in the conduct of our anticrime campaigns," he said.

Razon ordered all police commanders to disseminate his directive down to the last policeman, warning that any violation would be "dealt with accordingly."

The order was his response to the public outcry resulting from the arrest of 17 Muslims on Jan. 7.

The Criminal Investigation and Detection Group had accused them of plotting to bomb the Black Nazarene Feast in Quiapo. Police claimed that some of the suspects were to serve as suicide bombers.

Last Sunday, the procession pushed through without any untoward incident.

In his statement, Razon said it was "premature" to conclude that the suspects were terrorists, and that they were about to bomb the Quiapo feast.

He pointed out that only two of the suspects were charged by the Manila prosecutor's office. The rest were freed after prosecutors found no evidence to charge them with illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

Still, Muslim groups said the damage had been done. They demanded punishment for the CIDG and its officer-in-charge Senior Supt. Rodolfo "Boogie" Mendoza.

Meanwhile, Philippine National Police Director General Edgar Aglipay yesterday said he was standing by the CIDG operation.

He apparently didn't mind the revelations that the raid was part of a "fabricated" CIDG case operation plan titled "Green Archer."

The INQUIRER had been furnished a copy of the "bogus" 10-page report claiming that Islamic converts would assassinate President Macapagal-Arroyo and bomb several targets in Metro Manila and Cavite.

"There were (pieces of) evidence gathered," Aglipay insisted in a press conference. He then recounted events that led to the filing of criminal charges against Leonardo Ricalde and Afgani Alonto.

Ricalde and Alonto's supporters claimed that the CIDG planted the guns and explosives allegedly found in their possession, if only to give the raid a semblance of credibility.

Muslims denounce warrantless raids vs members

By Leila B. Salaverria

INCENSED about what they claimed were numerous warrantless raids on Islamic communities and the planting of evidence against their members, around 900 Muslims and their Christian supporters marched in protest toward Malacañang up to the Chino Roces Bridge yesterday afternoon.

Pendatun Disimban, national president of the Assalam party list, said the police raid of the Islamic Information Center in Quaipo consisted the last straw .

Sixteen people were taken into custody during last week's raid in Manila's Muslim enclave at Quiapo, but only two were charged and later released on bail.

Police claimed to have recovered homemade bombs and weapons, and that five of the 16 people detained allegedly belonged to a terrorist group called "Hukbong Khalid Trinidad," or "Khalid Trinidad Army," part of a clandestine movement seeking to convert Christians to Islam and use them to carry out terror attacks.

Some of those detained and later released accused police of planting the evidence, but Philippine National Police chief Edgar Aglipay told reporters there was "strong evidence" against two of the suspects.

But Muslim activists were unconvinced.

Disimban said the police made a big mistake when they filed charges against Afgani Alonto. He said Alonto was a known Muslim leader and the son of former senator Ahmad Domocao Alonto and a very respected figure in the community.

Disimban said countercharges would be filed against the police, saying two witnesses saw the police plant the evidence claimed to have been seized during the raid.

He added that Muslims at the Islamic Information Center were also angered by the police entering the prayer room wearing shoes.

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Date/Time	Lecturer	Subject
Jan. 29, 2005 8:00-10:00	USEC Ernesto L. Pineda Department of Justice; Bar Reviewer	Pitfalls In Practice: Suspension and Disbarment (Legal Ethics) 2 units
Jan. 29, 2005 10:00-12:00	Justice Diosdado M. Peralta Senior Member, 1st Division Sandiganbayan	Comprehensive Dangerous Drugs Law (R.A. 9165), The New Laws on Anti-Rape, Anti-Sexual Harassment, Illegal Possession of Firearms, Hazing, Child Abuse and Other Special Penal Laws (Law Reforms in Specific Areas of Law) 2 units
Jan. 29, 2005 1:00-4:00	Dean Custodio O. Parlade Former Dean, San Sebastian College of Law; International Arbitrator	International and Domestic Commercial Arbitration: (Filing of Claims, Preparation for Arbitration, Arbitral Awards and their Enforcement) (Alternative Dispute Resolution [ADR]) 3 units
Jan. 29, 2005 4:00-7:00	USEC. Josephus B. Jimenez Department of Labor and Employment; Bar Reviewer	Practice and Procedure Before the Labor Arbiters and National Labor Relations Commission (Procedural [Labor] Law) 3 units
Feb. 5, 2005 8:00-10:00	Justice Ruben T. Reyes Chairman, 5th Division Court of Appeals	Jurisprudential Updates in Civil and Criminal Procedure (Substantive and Procedural Law) 2 units
Feb. 5, 2005 10:00-12:00	Justice Lucas P. Bersamin Associate Justice, Court of Appeals	Pre-Trial and Trial Skills: Civil and Criminal Cases (Pre-Trial and Trial Skills) 2 units
Feb. 5, 2005 1:00-3:00	Justice Ruben T. Reyes Chairman, 5th Division Court of Appeals	Problem Areas in Legal Ethics (Legal Ethics) 2 units
Feb. 5, 2005 3:00-5:00	USEC. Ernesto L. Pineda Department of Justice, Bar Reviewer	Anti-Violence Against Women and Children (R.A. 9262) (Law Reforms in Specific Areas of Law) 2 units
Feb. 5, 2005 5:00-7:00	Justice Regalado E. Maambong Associate Justice, Court of Appeals; B.S. Criminology	Essentials of Forensic Ballistics, Questioned Documents and Fingerprinting (Technology and the Law) 2 units
Feb. 12, 2005 8:00-10:00	Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval Chairman, 2nd Division Sandiganbayan	The Art of Direct and Cross Examinations (Trial Skills) (Pre-Trial and Trial Skills) 2 units
Feb. 12, 2005 10:00-12:00	Justice Hector L. Hofileña (ret.) Associate Justice, Court of Appeals	Rules on Notarial Practice and Updates in Legal Ethics (Legal Ethics) 2 units
Feb. 12, 2005 1:00-3:00	Atty. Ronaldo P. Ledesma Head, Board of Special Inquiry, BI	International Law and the Admission of Aliens (International Law and International Conventions) 2 units
Feb. 12, 2005 3:00-5:00	Prof. Mario E. Valderrama Commercial Arbitrator	Arbitration Law in the Philippines and Mediation (Alternative Dispute Resolution) [ADR] 2 units
Feb. 19, 2005 8:00-10:00	Justice Rodolfo G. Palattao (ret.) Sandiganbayan	Review of Anti-Corruption Laws and Updates in Jurisprudence (Substantive [Criminal] Law) 2 units
Feb. 19, 2005 10:00-12:00	Justice Hugo E. Gutierrez, Jr. (ret.) Supreme Sourt; Former Dean, PCU College of Law	Legal Writing: Pleadings and Appellate Briefs (Legal Writing and Oral Advocacy) 2 units
Feb. 19, 2005 1:00-3:00	USEC. Ernesto L. Pineda Department of Justice; Bar Reviewer	Hearsay Evidence: Effects and Consequences (Substantive and Procedural [Civil and Criminal] Law) 2 units
Feb. 19, 2004 3:00-5:00	Justice Magdangal M. de Leon Associate Justice, Court of Appeals	Oral Advocacy (Legal Writing and Oral Advocacy) 2 units
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Congress wants to shift tax burden to big business

From page A1

now want to shift the burden of paying more taxes to big business.

"Why impose incremental burdens on consumers and cooperatives while corporations get away with no additional burden or equitable share in solving the fiscal crisis?" said Albay Rep. Joey Salceda.

'Let's get the corporates'

Salceda said Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin supports his proposal to revert the corporate income tax rate to its pre-1998 level. "Let's go get the corporates! A two-percentage point increase should not be difficult to absorb among corporations," Boncodin said.

Salceda, one of President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic adviser, is proposing a bill that would reinstate the fixed tax rate of corporations to the original level of 35 percent prior to the implementation of the Comprehensive Tax Reform Program six years ago. The current rate is 32 percent.

The increase in the corporate income tax to 35 percent would yield P13.2 billion in additional revenues this year, he said.

Salceda noted that corporations account for less than a quarter of all tax payments chipped in mostly by consumers and fixed-income workers.

"There is a pervasive impression that corporations are not being made to share the burden which is why there is a nasty resistant against substantial tax measures like a hike in the value added tax to 12 percent," said Salceda,

Data from the National Tax Research Center showed that in 2003 corporations paid a total of P112 billion or only 23.5 percent of the P476 billion total tax collections of the Bureau of Internal Revenue during the period.

Profits surged by 66%

INQUIRER research showed that the top 5,000 corporations in the Philippines saw their profit surged by 66 percent to P253.509 billion in 2003 from P152.724 billion in 2002.

In the Senate, there is also a plan to adopt a two-tiered net income tax system for corporations that would range between 25 percent and 40 percent with a different rate for income below P1 million and earnings above P1 million.

Sen. Ralph Recto estimated that such a scheme would generate between P30 billion and P60 billion annually.

Nightmare for BIR

But Salceda said such plan would create distortions compared to the flat tax rate which was more simple. "This would be messy, an administrative nightmare for the BIR that could barely cope with the current uniform rate," Salceda said.

"While this would finally catch those allegedly exaggerated profits of telecommunication firms, it would also penalize firms who have to risk and employ huge resources to earn them," Salceda said.

Aside from raising revenues, Salceda said taxing corporations would dispel the growing perception that Malacañang and Congress were unduly burdening consumers and fixed-income workers with more taxes.

Salceda said that by targeting corporations, it would be easier for the public to accept other tax measures being pushed in Congress such as the increase in the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent and the lifting of VAT exemptions.

"This would correct the current sequence and complexion of tax measures that have been opposed as added burden on the masses, whether rightly or wrongly supported by empirical data," Salceda said. "We must make profitable firms, not just cellular firms, do their share."

Telco's miniscule tax

Palawan Rep. Abraham Mitra revealed that telecommunications firms are paying a minuscule 5.29 percent of their total profits as taxes.

Mitra cited a confidential study which showed that while the top 13 telecommunications companies generated combined gross sales of P166 billion in 2003, they paid only P12.8 billion in taxes, or almost the same as Fortune Tobacco's.

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HEAVILY tax-burdened women's groups hold a rally to protest pending legislation in Congress to increase the value-added tax from 10 to 12 percent as this would translate into higher costs of basic commodities. JOAN BONDOC

For 2003, Smart Telecommunications had a tax burden of 9.65 percent out of total sales of P57.8 billion; Globe had 5.198 percent out of total sales of P39.91 billion; PLDT had 6.92 percent out of the total sales of P45.82 billion; Piltel had 1.29 percent out of P10.65 billion sales; Bayantel had 5.94 percent out of P3.30 billion sales; Digitel had 5.1 percent out of P3.6 billion sales; Ericsson had 11.83 percent out of P1.76 billion sales; and Nokia had 7.16 percent out of P2.4 billion sales.

In contrast, Mitra pointed out, a government employee with an annual salary of P248,000 has a higher tax burden at 18 percent than any telecom firm.

"The numbers don't lie : In the vise-grip of taxation, more are extracted from a salaried worker than from telco titans," Mitra said.

The government, he said, was only asking the telcos to pay an additional P5 billion to enable the government to lick the fiscal crisis.

Congress plans to shelve other pending tax measures once the VAT and the Tax Incentives measures were passed into law.

House Majority Leader Prospero Nograles yesterday said that since the President herself announced that the government can already attain its revenue target once the proposed VAT increase and the Tax Incentives measures were passed, other tax measures will be placed on the backburner.

"We won't press for new taxes anymore. The VAT increase plus all the previous tax measures already passed by the House is already sufficient," Nograles said.

To offset negative effects

Congress will now start deliberating on the social and environmental measures which will offset the negative effects of the new tax measures to ordinary taxpayers.

"We will try to enact more laws which would give our people a better fighting chance to staving off the ripple effects of the new tax measures," he said.

Already, the House of Representatives has passed on third and final reading a measure extending the Rent Control Law. Also on the agenda is the proposed P125 across-the-board legislated wage increase.

Bitter pills

Nograles admitted that the new tax measures approved by Congress were indeed "bitter pills" that people will have to swallow to address the country's economic woes.

Ms. Arroyo has proposed eight new tax measures to raise P80 billion to avert a full-blown fiscal crisis.

The tax measures include:

- The shift to the gross income system from the VAT system
- Taxation of the windfall profits of telecommunications companies
- The increase in excise taxes on alcohol and tobacco products and on petroleum products
- The rationalization of fiscal incentives
- The installation of a targeted tax amnesty system
- The legislation of a performance-driven system for revenue agencies.

On hold

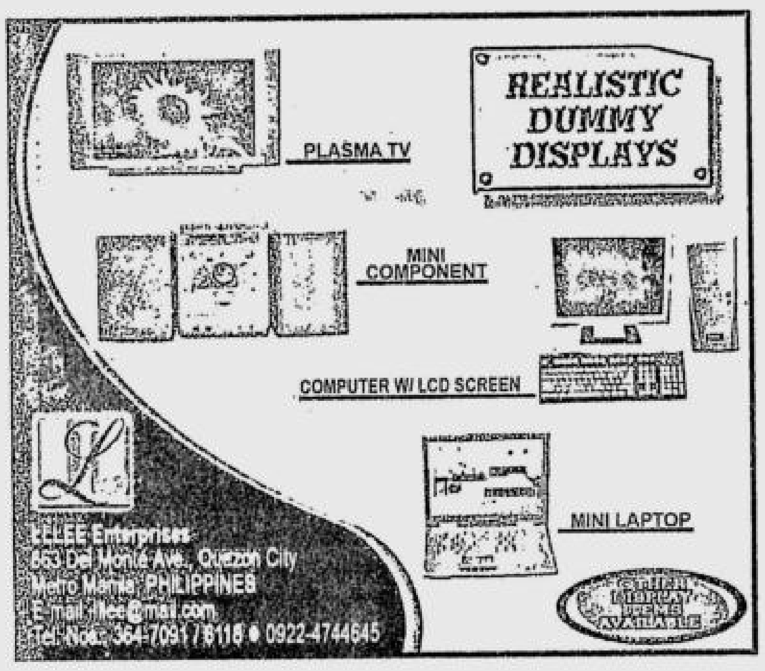
So far, Congress has passed the six tax measures but decided to defer the imposition of the excise tax on petroleum products and the rationalization of fiscal incentives.

The proposed increase in the VAT as well as the Tax Amnesty Bill were on their final stage of legislation.

However, the controversial franchise tax for telecommunication companies and the creation of a revenue collection body which would replace the Bureau of Internal Revenue will have to wait, said Nograles.

Compensation for rights victims

Nograles said Congress will start deliberating on other pending measures such as the compensation claim of human rights victims of martial law, the amendments to labor laws as approved by the committee on labor, the proposed total log ban, and the medical malpractice bill.



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SC stops Piatco collection ...

From page A1

Benipayo said the administration was glad that Gingoyon had been stopped, adding that it would pursue the judge's removal from the case.

'Partial to Piatco'

"We asked for [the TRO] and we are happy that the Supreme Court issued it in the interest of the Filipino people. This order binds [Gingoyon's] hands and feet," he said.

In his petition filed on Thursday, Benipayo asked the high court to remove Gingoyon from hearing the case and proposed that it be raffled off to another judge.

Benipayo has accused Gingoyon of being partial to Piatco which tried but failed to withdraw the $62.34 million from the Landbank after the judge issued the order.

Liwayway Vinzons-Chato, Piatco's lawyer, said she was "saddened" by the SC order. She said the government should have let the lower court settle the issue of just compensation.

Just compensation involved factual issues that should have been left to the lower court and not to the high tribunal, which is not a "trier" of facts, she said.

'Discrimination'

Chato also accused the government of "discrimination," saying that it insisted that the Rules of Court and not R.A. 8974—the law governing the expropriation of private property for government infrastructure projects—should apply in the case.

She said RA 8974 has been used in all other expropriation cases, Piatco being the only exception.

Benipayo countered, however, that the law applied only to the acquisition of real property "needed as right of way, site or location for any national government infrastructure project."

"Obviously, (the terminal) is not a 'right-of-way, site or location for any national government infrastructure project' but the infrastructure itself," he said.

"(Gingoyon) cannot insist that (Piatco) be paid 100 percent of the zonal valuation of the terminal in accordance with that law, for precisely, airports do not have [Bureau of Internal Revenue] zonal valuations on which to base the deposits ... BIR zonal valuations are only for lands, not airport facilities," he added.

SC spokesperson Ismael Khan said it would likely take "a couple of weeks" before the issue is resolved.

The terminal has been in mothballs since 2003 when the President revoked Piatco's BOT contract with the government on grounds that certain terms were illegally renegotiated by her deposed predecessor, Joseph Estrada, in 1998.

All contracts voided

This was followed by a Supreme Court decision voiding all contracts awarded to Piatco.

The government moved to expropriate the Naia 3 last month even though the compensation dispute with Piatco had yet to be settled, saying that national interest dictated the immediate opening of the mothballed facility.

After getting control of the facility, however, its takeover was derailed by Gingoyon's order barring it from "exercising ownership" until Piatco was paid.

Despite its court actions tending to delay the settlement of its dispute with Piatco, the government said it would pay just and fair compensation.

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, a lawyer, questioned why the Solicitor General had to run to the high court at the first sign of an unfavorable ruling from a lower court.

He said it smacked of "bad faith" on the part of government considering its earlier assurances that it would pay just compensation to Piatco.

Foreign chambers

The Joint Foreign Chambers of Commerce yesterday expressed their support for the Naia 3 expropriation, in a paper submitted to the Department of Trade and Industry.

"The action of expropriation is always a risky action for any government. But there are times when it is clearly in the best of national interest to do so, as long as fair and just compensation is paid," said the organization comprising at least seven foreign business chambers.

2 arbitration cases

The expropriation did not affect the two arbitration cases involving the terminal, provided the government abides by whatever arbitrated financial settlement is finally reached, according to the paper released yesterday by the DTI.

A group of Piatco employees has also joined the fray, filing a motion as "defendant in intervention" with the Pasay City court asking it to quash the takeover and order the government to pay $565 million to Piatco.

"As employees who worked on the construction and development of the terminal, we have a lien on the building," the employees said.

Just compensation

They said the government's refusal to pay Piatco deprived them of the chance to receive just compensation for the work they have put in at Naia 3. *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Michael Lim Ubac and Nancy Carvajal*

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

UN urges Jakarta to drop troop deadline

BANDA ACEH, Indonesia—The UN urged Indonesia not to impose a deadline on foreign troops providing relief assistance in tsunami-hit Aceh province, while President George W. Bush predicted Friday that US aid would help defeat Islamic extremists.

"I am sure the Indonesian government will agree with me that the most important thing is to save lives and not have deadlines," said Jan Egeland, UN undersecretary for humanitarian affairs and emergency relief coordination.

Egeland was responding to Indonesian Vice President Yusuf Kalla's statement earlier this week that he wanted all foreign military to leave Indonesia by the end of March or "the sooner the better."

The armed forces of Australia, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and the United States all rushed units to Aceh in the wake of the Dec..26 tsunami disaster which killed more than 110,000 Indonesians out of a total of over 163,000 deaths around Asia.

Egeland said that while the March deadline was unlikely to pose major problems because by then roads would be cleared, he was concerned about foreign aid workers in Aceh.

The Indonesian government has imposed restrictions on the movement of foreigners in the strife-torn province, saying they were under threat from separatist rebels of the Free Aceh Movement (GAM).

"I am worried of insecurity and possible movement restrictions either by insecurity or by political restrictions on our movements," Egeland said.

Indonesia's government launched a massive offensive against GAM rebels in May 2003 and banned most foreigners from Aceh in a bid to avoid international scrutiny. But it was forced to scale back its offensive and reopen Aceh to foreigners following the tsunami disaster.

Indonesia's Interior Minister Muhammad Ma'ruf said Friday contact had been made with the rebels a day after the separatists called for talks to safeguard the tsunami relief effort.

"We have communicated with them and now it's up to them," he said during a visit to the devastated west Aceh town of Meulaboh. He did not elaborate. *AFP*

US scales back hopes for Iraq vote

WASHINGTON—While billing the upcoming Iraqi elections as a democratic milestone, US officials are steadily lowering the bar on what would constitute a successful vote amid escalating violence and intimidation.

Less than three weeks before the Jan. 30 polls, Washington is openly acknowledging that the vote will be flawed and is playing down any comparison with last year's relatively smooth ballot in Afghanistan.

The White House conceded Wednesday that the election of an interim national assembly in Iraq was "not going to be perfect," and officials said the vote looked problematic in at least four of the country's 18 provinces.

After describing the elections as a "historical moment" in Iraq's transition from dictatorship to US occupation to self-rule, President George W. Bush is now seeing them as only one step on a long road.

"I think it is really important to keep this election in perspective, ... that it's part of a process," Bush said in an interview published Tuesday in the Wall Street Journal.

Both Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld and Secretary of State Colin Powell have warned that violence and a stubborn Iraqi insurgency would continue beyond the vote for a 275-seat assembly.

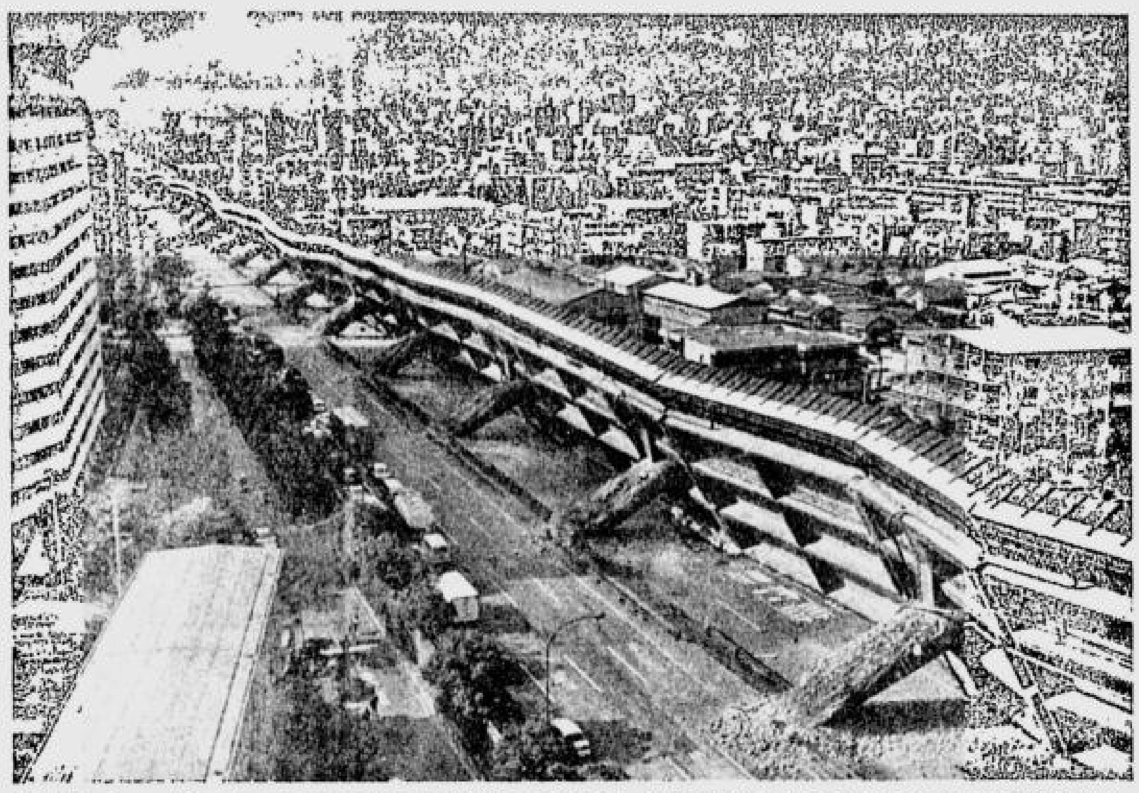
US officials, who were rapturous over what they called a massive turnout in Afghanistan's presidential election last October, made no predictions for Iraq's first vote after the ouster of Saddam Hussein.

Indeed, the numbers did not look promising, with the main party representing Iraq's Sunni Muslim minority boycotting the polls. An internal state department poll showed 88 percent of Sunnis might stay away if voting was too dangerous.

Adnan Pachachi, a Sunni elder statesman, feared turnout might be less than 10 percent in some bastions of the insurgency that has waged a campaign of bombings, assassinations and threats to derail the election.

But the Bush administration, still groping for an exit strategy in Iraq nearly two years after its invasion, has adamantly refused to postpone the elections or set down criteria for deciding whether they are credible.

"We will see the results of the election and then we will make a judgment at that time," Powell told AFP last month. "I don't think it would be helpful to speculate as to what redlines ... would be acceptable or not acceptable." The United States has worked hard to encourage turnout among the estimated 14 million people in Iraq eligible to vote for the 275-seat assembly that will draft a new constitution and prepare for definitive elections by December. *AFP*



AERIAL view of the Nishinomiya area near Kobe taken Jan. 17, 1995 shows a collapsed elevated highway after a massive quake hit the area.

AFP

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10 years after Kobe, Japan preparedness still an issue

TOKYO—Ten years after an earthquake killed more than 6,400 people in western Japan, wrecked the city of Kobe and destroyed the myth that the nation was prepared for disaster, Japan's plans to deal with a big quake remain patchy.

The government and many localities are better prepared to avoid the immediate chaos that raised Kobe's death toll but progress on preventive steps to lessen the physical impact of a major quake has been slow, experts say.

"What hurts the most is that proper steps have not been taken in the area of how to reduce damage, because the focus has been on steps to be taken after an earthquake," said Hajime Kagiya, a former director of disaster prevention in a district of Tokyo.

"I feel as if 10 years have been wasted." That lament resonates even more loudly after the huge tsunami that struck Indian Ocean shores on Dec. 26 without warning, killing more than 162,000 and leaving millions homeless.

The 7.3-magnitude Kobe quake, Japan's worst disaster in half a century, hit at 5:46 a.m. on Jan. 17, 1995, killing 6,433 people, forcing more than 300,000 to take refuge and destroying homes, factories, roads and railways.

The damage bill totaled about $100 billion, making it by some estimates the costliest natural catastrophe in history.

Japanese authorities came under heavy criticism after the quake for their sluggish and confused response.

Failure to regulate traffic meant clogged streets prevented fire engines from getting through, and the central government was slow to set up a crisis center in Tokyo and deploy the military.

Government crisis management, at least, has improved.

Army commanders can now order the dispatch of units without waiting for a formal request from local authorities, while a disaster task force headed by the prime minister can issue orders to local authorities and gather information more swiftly.

But wide disparities exist among towns and cities.

"I think that gaps have grown much wider after the Kobe earthquake," said Itsuki Nakabayashi, a Tokyo Metropolitan University professor who specializes in urban planning and disaster mitigation. "Overall, major cities are ahead while smaller municipalities have fallen behind."

That said, a recent study predicted that the mega-metropolis of Tokyo with its regional population of 35 million would be the worst hit of the world's big cities if struck by a huge quake.

"Today, a severe earthquake in the Tokyo-Yokohama conurbation would result in hundreds of thousands of fatalities, damages running into trillions of dollars, and global economic repercussions," said a report by German reinsurer Munich Re. *Reuters*

Prince Charles orders Harry to visit Auschwitz

LONDON—Britain's Prince Charles has ordered his son Harry to visit Auschwitz after he caused outrage around the world by wearing a Nazi uniform to a party, the Sun newspaper reported on Friday.

The paper said heir-to-the-throne Charles was "incandescent with rage" with the 20-year-old grandson of Queen Elizabeth and wants him to make a private trip to the concentration camp to learn more about the Holocaust.

Jewish groups had demanded Harry go the camp in southwest Poland to make amends for wearing a swastika armband and an army shirt with Nazi regalia at a costume party on Saturday.

The Sun, which broke the Nazi gaffe story on Thursday, quoted an unnamed royal source as saying that Prince Charles also told his older son, William, to travel with Harry to Auschwitz.

"There will be no publicity and they will go with a Jewish charity," the source was quoted as saying in the Sun.

"Their father has visited Auschwitz himself and believes Harry and William would both benefit by grasping a greater understanding of the horrors by actually visiting."

The paper said William, 22, accepted part of the blame because he was present when Harry picked the Nazi costume in a hire shop before the private party in southwest England.

A royal spokesperson said he would not comment on any private conversations between Prince Charles and his sons, adding: "We wouldn't rule it out, we wouldn't rule it in."

Harry's behavior drew a storm of protest from around the world, coming two weeks before the Jan. 27 events to commemorate 60 years since the liberation of Auschwitz. *Reuters*

BMX rider Ben Wallace performing the "Einstein Flip" over an Albert Einstein look-alike to mark the launch of Einstein Year at the Science Museum in London. REUTERS

Rappers enlisted to make Einstein youth-friendly

By Jeremy Laurence

LONDON—Bicycle stunts, rap music and modern dance—all in the name of Einstein.

Hardly E=mc2, but 100 years after Albert Einstein published three seminal research papers which changed scientific thinking about the universe forever, physicists are conscious they must rebrand their shunned science to appeal to young people.

Einstein Year was launched in Britain this month at a youth driven ceremony at London's Science Museum where a BMX stunt rider performed an "Einstein flip," said to be the first bicycle stunt to be designed by a physicist.

"There tends to be a knee-jerk negative reaction about physics —that it is boring and hard. What we are trying to do is change people's perceptions," said Caitlin Watson of the Institute of Physics (IoP) in London.

"We want to show that physics is not about the stereotype of the mad scientist. Physicists are normal people doing normal things."

Rap artist DJ Vader has also been drafted in by organizers to rebrand physics as cool. His love song "Einstein (not enough time)" has been adopted as the theme tune for the year-long celebrations across Britain.

It is unlikely he will ever replace Einstein as the face of science. Einstein's iconic image is known the world over.

"We remember (him) now mainly as an older man, the benign and unkempt sage on a poster and T-shirt," said Prof. Martin Rees of Cambridge University.

"That's surprising because his great work was well over by the time he was 40. At that time (1905)... he was a nattily dressed young professor. In a way, the icon is rather different from the man who made these great achievements."

Some people say the celebrations marking Einstein's annus mirabilis border on being irreverent.

"Of course, physics is a science used in all kinds of applications in technology, the environment etce-tera, and anything we can do, even if it means dumbing down to enthuse young people about physics, is surely excellent," said Rees.

Einstein loved music and cycling. He was also a school drop-out.

He did so badly at school his teachers told his parents to take him out because he was "too stupid to learn" and it would be a waste of resources to invest time and energy in his education. The school suggested that his parents get him an easy, manual labor job as soon as they could.

He did finally graduate from the Polytechnic School in Zurich, but could not find a job in a university so he worked for the Swiss Patent Office and spent his spare time working on theoretical physics problems.

In 1905 while still at the patent office and at just 26 years of age, he published three papers in the leading German physics journal, Annalen der Physik.

The papers on Brownian motion, the photoelectric effect and special relativity contained explanations and ideas that changed the way we view the world. His work on photoelectric effect earned him a Nobel Prize in 1921. *Reuters*

Episcopalian clerics regret consecrating 1st gay bishop

CHICAGO—US Episcopalian bishops on Thursday expressed regret for having consecrated the group's first openly gay bishop, but said they needed more time to respond to a call that they halt such ordinations and stop blessing same-sex marriages.

The issue, which threatens the 70-million-member worldwide Anglican Church with schism, also swept the largest US Lutheran denomination on the same day.

In that separate development a divided task force of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America declined to recommend the denomination bless same-sex unions or approve the ordination of ministers involved in gay relationships.

It did call on congregants to work for ways to "live together faithfully in the midst of our disagreements."

The status of homosexuals is a question causing debate and pain in a number of Christian churches. For the Anglicans it reached a new level in 2003 with the consecration of Gene Robinson of New Hampshire, the church's first bishop known to be in a same-sex relationship.

The 140-member House of Bishops of the Episcopal Church USA, after a two-day meeting in Salt Lake City, Utah, issued a statement expressing their "sincere regret for the pain, the hurt and the damage caused... by certain actions of our church." They said the apology was "a sign of our deep desire" to remain part of the worldwide Anglican communion.

Frank Griswold, the 2.3 million-member group's presiding bishop, told Reuters the apology was a direct response to the so-called Windsor Report, a document issued at the request of the Anglican church leadership last October.

That report urged the liberal-dominated North American bishops not only to express their regret but to impose a moratorium on liturgies blessing same-sex marriages and the consecrating of gay bishops.

Thursday's statement from Salt Lake City said the bishops struggled with the marriage and bishop issues but had insufficient time to reach a consensus. Griswold predicted the issue would remain unresolved for some time, even after the church leadership meets in February in Belfast to formally receive the Windsor Report.

He said there "simply wasn't time" to reach a consensus at the Salt Lake City meeting. *Reuters*

Militants defy Abbas peace call, kill 6 Israeli workers in Gaza

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip—Israel signaled Friday it will hold off on harsh retaliation for a bombing-and-shooting attack by Palestinian militants that killed six Israeli workers at a Gaza cargo crossing, and give newly elected Palestinian leader Mahmoud Abbas a chance to rein in violent groups.

Thursday night's shooting rampage at the Karni crossing, Gaza's main lifeline, marked the militants' first major challenge to Abbas, who has spoken out against violence and has said he would try to negotiate a truce.

Three Palestinian gunmen were killed in the attack, and three armed groups claimed responsibility, including Hamas and the Al Aqsa Martyrs' Brigades with ties to Abbas' ruling Fatah movement.

Israel and the United States have said they would judge Abbas by his actions.

However, Israeli Justice Minister Tzipi Livni suggested Friday that Israel would give Abbas, widely known as Abu Mazen, more time to deal with the militants. "In order to try to prevent the next attack, we have to try and strengthen Abu Mazen as a leader, based on the assumption that he can control the terror groups," Livni told Israel Army Radio, adding that Israel would draw the line at endangering its security.

In response to the attack, Israel indefinitely closed the Karni crossing, through which goods flow in and out of the fenced-in coastal strip. The Israeli military had eased checking at the crossing in recent weeks to cut down on waiting periods, and had extended opening hours. A second Gaza crossing, for Palestinian travelers, was closed last month, after an attack there killed five Israeli soldiers.

The closures mean Gaza is now largely cut off, and the renewed hardships hit Palestinians just a week before a major Muslim holiday, Eid al-Adha, a time for shopping and family visits. Many Palestinians, exhausted after more than four years of fighting, were complaining privately about the militants targeting crossings.

Abbas has said he will not use force against militants. Instead, he is expected to try to co-opt them by asking Al Aqsa gunmen, many of them former policemen, to return to their jobs, and by offering Hamas a say in decision-making. The Islamic militant group has also said it would participate in legislative elections in July.

In coming weeks, Abbas is to conduct Egyptian-brokered talks with the militants in Gaza and in Cairo. Egypt has renewed a proposal for a one-year suspension of attacks, according to a senior Hamas official, who spoke on condition of anonymity.

Militants are divided on how to respond to Abbas.

Sami Abu Zuhri, a Hamas spokesperson, said the attack "was a message to the Israeli enemy, definitely not to Abu Mazen." He said meetings with Abbas would resume soon "to organize the Palestinian house."

The top Hamas official in the West Bank, Hassan Yousef, said the group is ready to suspend attacks as part of a deal with Abbas. Asked about Thursday's attack, Yousef said Hamas had freedom of action as long as there is no agreement.

Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerrillas in Lebanon are emerging as a major spoiler. Hezbollah is funding small groups within the militant factions, including some Al Aqsa gunmen in the West Bank city of Nablus.

Abbas and his aides were not available for comment Friday.

Israeli Transport Minister Meir Shetreet said Abbas' attempt at persuasion would fail, and that he must crack down. "There has to be zero tolerance for terrorists," Shetreet told Israel Radio. "If he (Abbas) doesn't do this, he misses a great opportunity to lead the Palestinians in a different direction."

The attack took place just before 11 p.m. Thursday. The militants detonated a large bomb at a door in a security wall between the Israeli and Palestinian sides of the crossing, creating a hole, the military said. The bomb weighed as much as 100 kg, Army Radio reported. *AP*

Iran court summons Nobel laureate

TEHRAN—Iran's judiciary has ordered 2003 Nobel Peace Prize winner and human rights lawyer Shirin Ebadi to appear before the feared Revolutionary Court or face arrest, Ebadi said on Thursday.

Ebadi, who has riled religious hardliners in the Islamic state by defending many high-profile political dissidents, was not informed of any charge against her.

"They have summoned me to the Revolutionary Court," Ebadi said. "It was mentioned that if I don't attend within three days they will arrest me.

"It is not written in the letter why I have been summoned and I have no idea what it is about," she added.

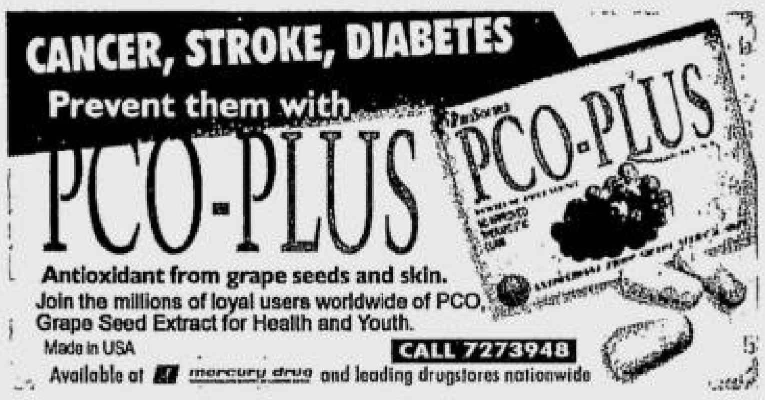
Ebadi, 57, the first Muslim woman and first Iranian to win the Nobel Peace Prize, said she still had not decided when she would attend the court.

Close colleague Mohammad Ali Dadkhah said earlier that Ebadi planned to attend the court on Saturday.

"Based on the international view of Shirin Ebadi as Iran's only Nobel Peace Prize winner this move could damage Iran's image in the international community," he said.

The United States, Iran's arch-foe, called the move a violation of international standards of human rights and said it was watching the situation.

"We will continue to follow closely the (Iranian) government's actions against Ms. Ebadi and others as well as the deteriorating situation in Iran, and will continue to raise this issue and our grave concern over the worsening human rights situation in Iran with friends and allies in the region," a State Department official said. *Reuters*



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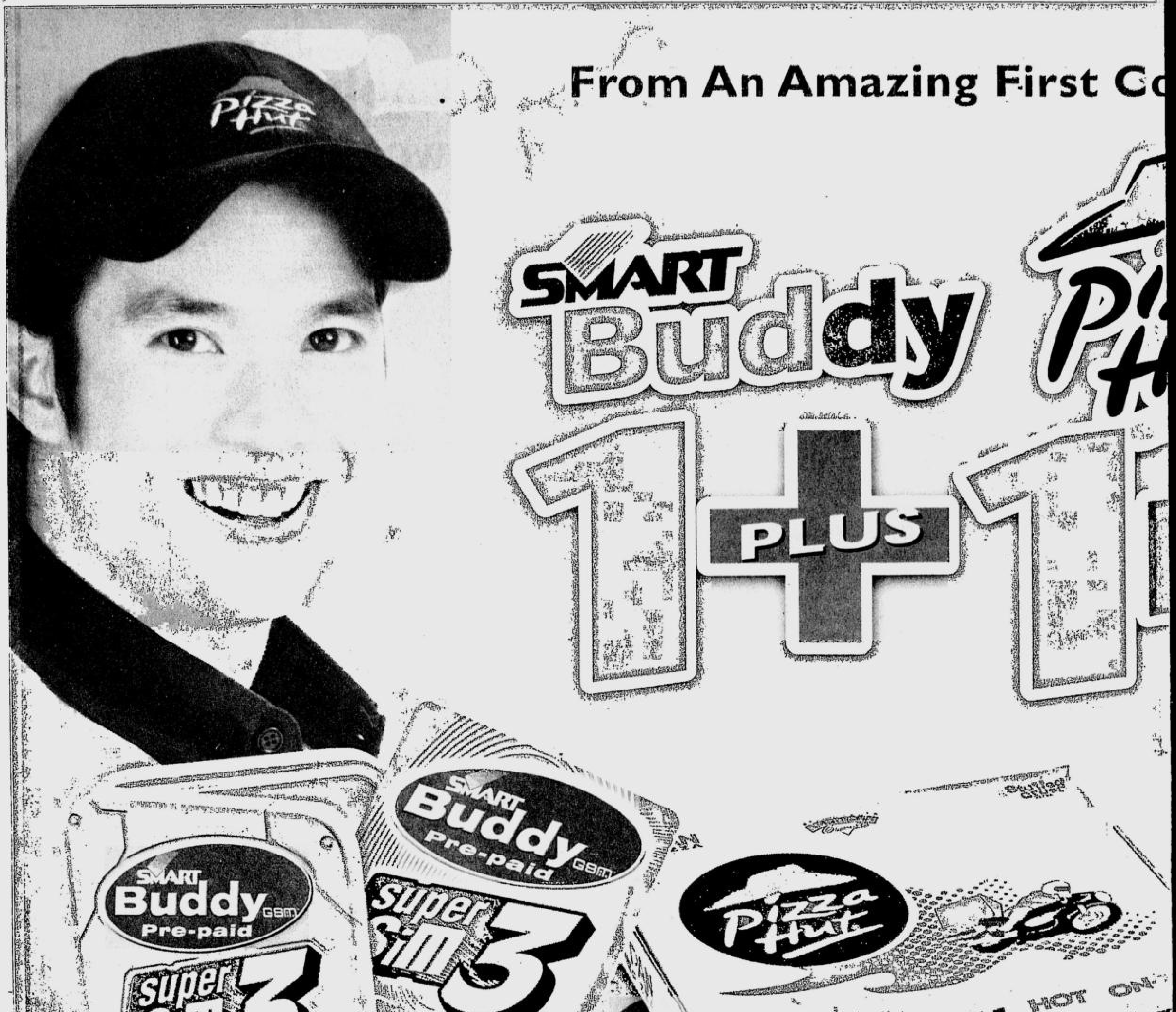
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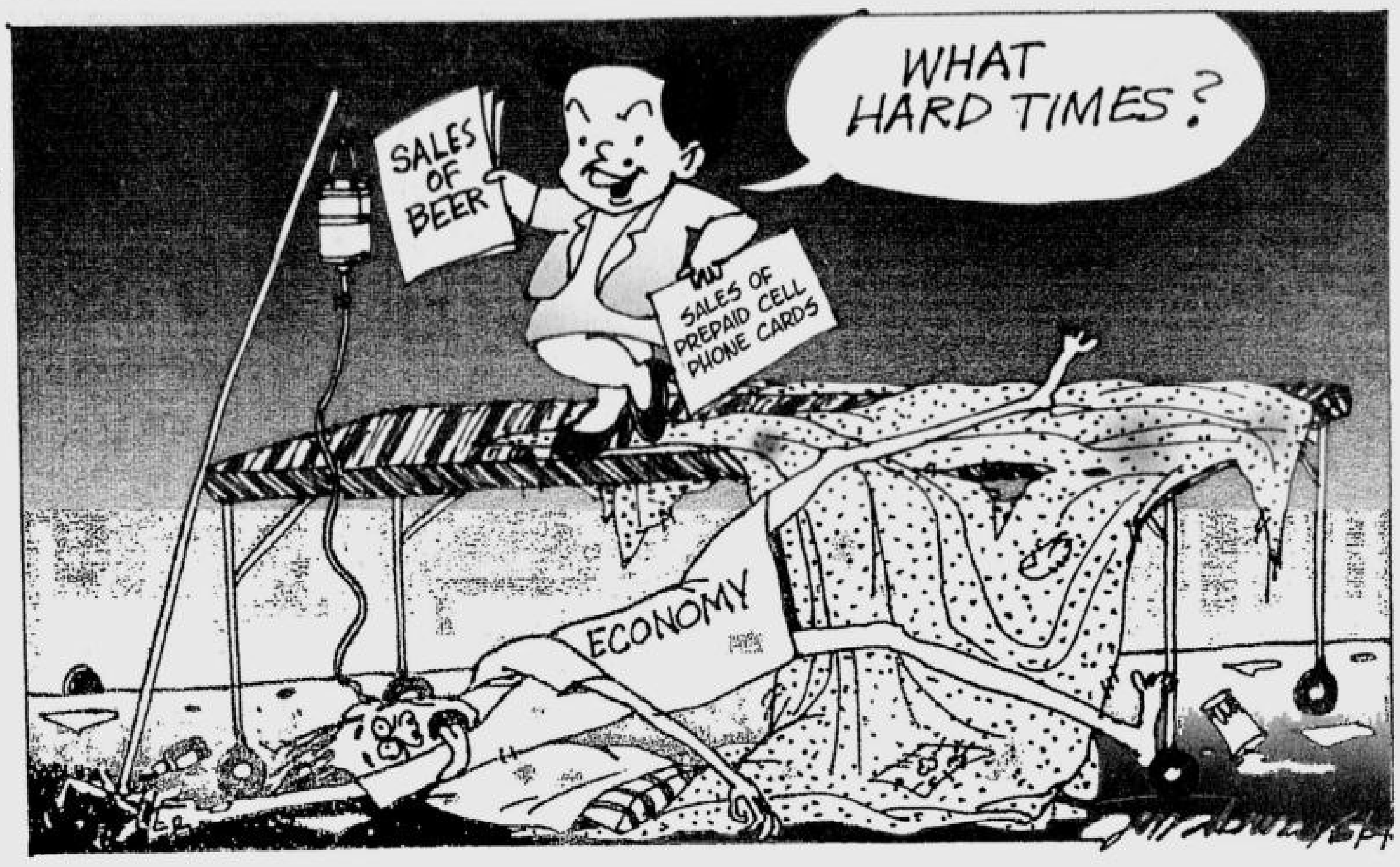

Kid in a candy shop

EDITORIAL

THOSE days are gone. I have responsibilities now," Joseph Estrada told Agence France-Presse the other day. He was responding to media reports that he was living it up and partying in Hong Kong following his knee operation. But who did the disgraced former president he think he was kidding? Possibly, at the rate Hong Kong has been scandalized by his stay, the only person left to fool is himself.

When Estrada pleaded to anyone who would listen that "I ate dinner with friends, what is wrong with that? And the authorities would not give me leave to have a haircut before I came here, so I brought over my barber. Where is the harm in that?" he quite possibly thought he was entitled to some luxuries after his rather luxurious detention at home. The statement, in fact, summarizes what was—and is—wrong, with Estrada: he has such a total lack of propriety he shoots himself in the foot and then complains of the pain.

Estrada has announced that he is coming home. People should believe it when they see it. But even if he does return, the fact is his biggest enemy is himself.

After having rented a 2,700-square-foot flat at the Parkview in Hong Kong, after hosting dinner there for his family and his former Cabinet members and their wives, after having rented rooms in the hospital he was staying in (one reportedly just for the purpose of holding a round-the-clock buffet) and after flying his barber to Hong Kong on business class—no rational person can believe that Estrada is a new man. He is the same man who turned a formidable mandate into a people power revolution.

The behavior of Estrada in Hong Kong, where he underwent knee surgery, has been similar to that of a spoiled kid let loose in a candy shop. He stuffed his face, indulged his senses, spent wads and wads of cash. When he was called to task for his actions, he whined and cried.

This is the same man who says he has discovered God, who says he was at death's door several times, only to petulantly go against the authorities if they dared impose conditions to his requests for medical treatment. This is the man who says he wants to uphold the rule of law, but turns law enforcers tasked with supervising him into lackeys condoning his breaking the rules. This is the same man who pleads poverty, but has his barber flown to Hong Kong, and business class at that.

It shouldn't be surprising to anyone anymore that if Estrada is given an inch, he'll take a mile. He's been that way all his life. Still, it is galling that he grumbles about justice delayed, when he has intervened to ensure his trial would be delayed long enough to offer the prospects of a pardon in case of the election of his best friend. It is outrageous that he complains of his health, after he kept using his knees as a bargaining chip to get precisely the kind of trip he wanted. It is ridiculous that he claims to be in reduced circumstances when, locally and internationally, he has used every stratagem to make sure he can enjoy the utmost luxury.

To be sure, Estrada has also gotten a lot of help from a Palace that remains paranoid about his waning popularity. An imprisoned has-been still puts the fear of the mob in the mind of an administration that is possibly even more unpopular than Estrada. If Estrada shoots himself in the foot time and again, the administration seems to derive a perverse joy from making sure it gets hit by the ricocheting bullet.

Estrada has proven himself not only unrepentant, but incapable of not causing mischief. The government has given him every consideration, to the extent of being an accomplice to the delays and special consideration that both help Estrada's defense and harm the prosecution's efforts.

"Recoup and revive the rule of law, we insist, and no nonsense this time," former Senate President Jovito Salonga now demands. We agree and so do most rational people, we believe. Estrada's scandalous behavior is not just the self-indulgence of a self-destructive politician. It is a national—and since his Hong Kong surgery, an international—disgrace. How much more must the justice system and our political landscape endure?

Enough is enough. Estrada is far too old to continue acting like a spoiled brat.

Is the CTA an administrative body?

SEPARATE OPINION

Isagani A. Cruz

COMPANIES spend a lot of money to advertise their products, especially now with TV and radio facilities, as well as billboards, available to supplement the print media. Advertisements in newspapers and magazines are by themselves already enough to overwhelm the consuming public, but the successful advertising agencies do not believe in half-measures. They must go whole-hog to impress the public with their exaggerations.

Commercial interruptions are often exasperating, and advertisements in periodicals often crowd out the substantial matters, like the news and articles for which the reader buys the issue in the first place. The individual in the modern ambience has no choice. Watching or listening to a boxing bout, for example, means he will have to abide the commercials, too. If he missed the show on TV or the radio, he will have to plow through pages of come-ons for bras and airlines and medicines and what-have-you if he wants to read about the fight later on the sports pages.

The sad part is that for all their unwelcome ubiquity, these advertisements will be charged to the consumers they have irritated. Their cost, including the talent fees of the celebrities that could run to tens of millions of pesos, will be added to the price of the product. Those who patronize the things or services being sold (which are not as good as their hyperbolic sales talk) are paying for those fees although not many realize it.

As if that were not enough, the advertisements will also be claimed as deductible expenses when these companies file their income tax returns. The reason they can be extravagant in promoting their products is that they are able to get away with their claims if the tax examiners are not so vigilant or are questionably permissive. The savings to the claiming corporations can be tremendous. In effect, the companies will have successfully advertised their products for free, with the customers and the government footing the bill.

That is why I was glad when I read the case of Commissioner of Internal Revenue v. General Foods (Phil), Inc., 401 SCRA 545, where the government was sustained against the respondent's claim. Its deduction of more than P9 million for advertising was slammed down by the BIR.

In its income tax return for 1985, the respondent claimed as deduction, among other business expenses, the amount of P9,461,246 for media advertising for "Tang." In 1988, the BIR disallowed 50 percent of the deduction claimed, and the corporation appealed to the Court of Tax Appeals. The CTA dismissed the appeal, and the respondent went to the Court of Appeals, where it was sustained. The BIR then elevated the case to the Supreme Court, which affirmed the decision of the Court of Tax Appeals.

The high tribunal held that "it is the taxpayer's prerogative to determine the amount of advertising expenses it will incur and where to apply them. Said prerogative, however, is subject to certain considerations. The first relates to the extent to which such expenditures are actually capital outlays; this necessitates an inquiry into the nature or purpose of such expenditures. The second, which must be applied in harmony with the first, relates to whether the expenditures are ordinary and necessary. Concomitantly, for an expense to be considered ordinary, it must be reasonable in amount. The Court of Tax Appeals ruled that respondent corporation failed to meet the two foregoing limitations....We find said ruling to be well-founded."

The unanimous decision of the Third Division is perfectly acceptable except for the following portion that must have confused many members of the bar and the bench:

"It has been a long-standing policy and practice of the Court to respect the *conclusions of quasi-judicial agencies such as the Court of Tax Appeals*, a highly specialized body specifically created for the purpose of reviewing tax cases. The CTA, by the nature of its functions, is dedicated exclusively to the study and consideration of tax problems. It has necessarily developed an expertise on the subject. We extend due consideration to its opinion unless there is abuse or improvident exercise of its authority. Since there is none in the case at bar, the Court adheres to the findings of the CTA." *(Emphasis mine.)*

The CTA a quasi-judicial body? In Ursal v. Court of Tax Appeals, 101 Phil. 209, it was held that "instead of being another superior administrative agency, as was the former Board of Tax Appeals, the Court of Tax Appeals as created by Republic Act No. 1125 is part of the judicial system." In other words, it is a court of justice. Has the Supreme Court reversed that decision with the above-quoted *obiter dictum* or has it forgotten its own rulings? I believe a clarification is in order for the benefit of the legal profession.

Take a second look, Susan

GET REAL

Solita Collas-Monsod

I WAS an avid fan of the movie star Susan Roces in my youth (she was right up there with Gloria Romero and Charito Solis in my pantheon of Filipino actors). And when she came out of retirement to campaign for her husband, my admiration for her was rekindled because of her dignity and no-nonsense attitude. This was even more bolstered when she showed her displeasure to those who were exploiting her husband's death for their own ends—she is no dummy. If Fernando Poe Jr. had made her his spokesperson or campaign manager the election results might have been different. It may be recalled that pundits were opining that FPJ, during the campaign, was his own worst enemy.

That is why, I hope, she re-studies the situation before pursuing her desire to continue the electoral protest filed by her husband. For two reasons. The first is that on the basis of the proceedings of the national board of canvassers (i.e., Congress) last May, a little simple arithmetic will show that even if all the election returns (ERs) that were questioned during the canvassing were counted in FPJ's favor, he still would have lost. The second is that the protest filed by the opposition in the Supreme Court (as the Presidential Electoral Tribunal) seems to be less an effort to pursue FPJ's or the country's interests, than to further the political agenda of the rest of the opposition.

Let me elaborate on each reason. The matter of the arithmetic was already written about in a previous column (June 26, 2004), but it is worth repeating. Here is how it goes: The total number of ERs—where votes from a particular precinct are recorded—that were questioned during the canvassing was 1,390 (out of a universe of 216,000). Let us round that off to 2,000. Now assume an average of 200 voters per precinct (per the guidelines of the Commission on Elections in precinct planning). That means that the number of questioned votes was 400,000.

Now assume that all of those 400,000 votes were cast in favor of FPJ—that is to say, no one in those 2,000 precincts voted for President Macapagal-Arroyo—the total number of votes cast for FPJ rises by 400,000 and that for GMA falls by 400,000, for a total swing of 800,000.

But the final results showed that GMA won by 1.1 million votes. So even if the 800,000 swing had been recorded, her margin of victory would still have been 300,000 votes (if anyone thinks that is small, the margin of victory of George W. Bush in the last US elections was less than that—with a very much larger electorate).

Of course, FPJ could have won if the opposition had not been so divided; if he had not been so suspicious of the politicians around him and used them more; or if he had asked Susan to take a more visible part in the campaign (one remembers that the first time Edgardo Angara won his Senate seat, his wife Gloria did most of his campaigning, because he was sick during the campaign period); or if some of those around him had properly spent the money they had raised for his campaign instead of (this is at least the suspicion) squirreling it away for themselves. But these are all "could'a-would'a-should'a" speculations, and cannot change what actually happened.

Now with regard to the election protest itself—and its implications. The protest asks for the re-examination of 10,554 ERs (where those other 8,500 to 9,000 ERs come from, one has to wonder—they were apparently never mentioned during the month-long canvassing). But that is not all. It also wants a recount that would cover 118,339 precincts all over the country—involving some 23.5 million ballots.

Just to give the reader an order of magnitude here: The electoral protest in 2001 involving Grace Padaca and Faustino Dy in the third district of Isabela, which involved 812 precincts (and about 92,000 ballots), took about two and a half years to resolve. If the resolution of FPJ's electoral protest were to take the same relative amount of time, it would take anywhere from 362 years (118,339 ballot boxes divided by 812 ballot boxes times 2.5 years) or 639 years (23.5 million votes divided by 92,000 votes times 2.5 years). Even if you assume a recount that is 10 times faster, it would still take 36 years! How can this possibly advance the interests of the Filipino people or of FPJ? What does this imply about the seriousness of the effort that Susan Roces is thinking of lending herself to?

But here's the kicker. Any lingering doubts as to the seriousness of that protest should vanish when it is discovered that the "grounds" cited by the FPJ lawyer (Sixto Brillantes) for the FPJ election protest are an exact, word-for-word copy of the grounds cited in another case filed by the same lawyer in a 2001 election protest (Oscar Jaro vs. Homer Saguilayan) involving the mayoralty of Imus, Cavite! One can be pretty sure that FPJ would have kicked somebody's ass had he found this out. It may also interest Susan Roces to know that the protest filed by Loren Legarda's lawyer, Rufus Rodriguez, seems to have in turn been copied from the FPJ-copied-from-the-Imus case and, in the haste of copying, used the wrong gender for Noli de Castro (as in "Noli de Castro and her supporters"), and Loren's final prayer reads: "After the counting of the votes for President, I will be declared Vice President."

Does Susan really want to be part of that farce? If she wants to do right by the Filipino people, she would do better by using her energies to ensure clean elections in the future.

Erap's dazzling reentry

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

WITH HIS detention three and a half years ago and the plunder case against him seemingly moving slowly but inexorably, former President Estrada seemed only too happy to recede into the background and just support a new opposition leader who would free him from what looked like certain conviction. His lawyers' strategy seemed to be to just dribble his case until such a leader emerged, although from time to time his followers would be associated with rumors of "destabilization."

In the May 2004 elections, Estrada campaigned hard to get movie king Fernando Poe Jr. elected, doubtless hoping that his bosom friend would go easy on his plunder case, including extending him outright pardon, if he won. But FPJ did not win and his sudden death last month left a gaping void in the opposition.

* * *

Estrada has moved to recapture the leadership of the opposition and his first agenda is to unite the warring factions, notably those of Senators Edgardo Angara and Panfilo Lacson. He may have failed in the unity goal, but definitely he was able to capitalize on his recent trip to Hong Kong for a knee operation to make a dazzling political reentry—marked by his old lavish lifestyle and surrounded by his faithful former officials. Estrada sought—and got—the Filipino and international media's attention, including coverage by CNN. Obviously, he hasn't lost his old touch in playing to the gallery or tugging at the *masa*'s heartstrings. There was clearly expert orchestration of the news, especially about the supposed instability of the Arroyo administration and the restiveness of the usual military faction, and the mobilization of his followers, led by the loud-mouthed Ronald Lumbao. All these come on the heels of the fourth anniversary of his ouster on Jan. 16, 2001, a month before the observance of Edsa 1.

Preparations for Estrada's arrival at midday today have provoked a lot of frenzy, putting the administration seemingly on the defensive. Thoughtful citizens hope the police would just put Erap in a chopper at the airport and ship him posthaste to his Tanay resthouse, and clamp down on media coverage. *Tapos na dapat ang HK* escapade.

* * *

What needs to be done? Former Senate President Jovito Salonga has put it precisely: resume the trial of Estrada and finish it quickly. Salonga stressed that it's not only the accused but also our justice system that's on trial here. He is right. The way to stabilize the nation, so that it can pick up its life once again amid its problems, is to get on with Estrada's trial and finish it. But that did not seem to be his game plan from the beginning. His lawyers' unerring goal has been to delay judgment day and delay some more. But further delay shouldn't be allowed, not only because justice is being miscarried, but it's causing too much instability.

* * *

With the call for a speedy resumption of Estrada's trial, it's timely to recall the letter sent by seven lawyers who have served as private prosecutors in the Estrada trial: Ricardo Nepomuceno, Arno Sanidad, Pablito Sanidad, Anthony Peralta, Leonardo de Vera, Marichu Lambino and Christian Robert Lim, to INQUIRER editor in chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc last month. The lawyers disputed the INQUIRER's editorial which said that "the prosecution is losing steam." They admitted that "the prosecution process may be losing steam, but the prosecution panel remains unwavering in its commitment to see that justice is done." They pointed out that in presenting 76 witnesses, the prosecution never asked for a single postponement of trial, in contrast to the Estrada camp which resorted to all kinds of dilatory tactics. These included "firing" Erap's lawyers, only to reemploy them and repeatedly applying for foreign medical treatment since November 2001, when local expertise is very much available.

* * *

To buttress their argument about the exceedingly slow grinding of the wheels of justice in this case, the private prosecutors pointed out that they completed their presentation on April 30, 2003, which included "more than a foot high of documents." But they noted that the Sandiganbayan "finally compelled" the defense to present its first evidence only last Sept. 15, almost one and a half years from the conclusion of the prosecution's case. They also asked that hearings be conducted thrice a week, but the graft court denied the request and the Supreme Court sustained its decision.

* * *

The private prosecutors shared the INQUIRER's view that the criminal justice process "may be susceptible to erroneous considerations and influences," and lamented that the public has not followed through with its demand for justice and a swift decision on the Estrada plunder cases. They also decried that the Sandiganbayan's permit for Erap's HK trip "hardly drew a murmur of protest from the sectors and groups who, during the impeachment trial, rallied against the corruption symbolized by the former President." Said they: "The universities and colleges, the men of the cloth, the concerned businessmen and citizens, the public officials who rode on the crest of the impeachment issue? Where are they now?"

* * *

The private prosecutors reiterated their belief that accommodations, political or otherwise, made under the guise of "reconciliation" or "humanitarian reasons," but at the expense of truth and justice, "will never result in the intended peace or progress and development." They said, "Our experience after Edsa 1 confirms this: 'reconciliation' and 'peace' are not synonymous with 'compromise' and 'submission.'" Stressing that "there can never be a truly strong republic, where there is compromise without principles, or peace without justice," the private prosecutors said that like the INQUIRER, "we ask, as a people, where do we stand?"

Human rights for all

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

LIFE in the post-9/11 world has been difficult for many, particularly for migrants to Western countries but especially to the United States, for world travelers who must put up with seemingly endless security procedures and the constant threat of hijacking, and of course for the survivors, loved ones and friends of all who perished in the attacks, not just in New York, but in places like Bali and Madrid.

But none has been more adversely affected by the events at the World Trade Center than Muslims all over the world. Afghan and Iraqi civilians know firsthand what happens to "innocent bystanders" when they get caught between a world superpower and an implacable foe. But Muslims from the rest of the world, including Filipino Muslims, have also felt the brunt of the stigma, fear and loathing attached to all who profess belief in Allah. This even if, out of all the Muslims in the world, perhaps less than one percent were and are involved in terrorism or even support the terrorists.

That hasn't stopped Filipino authorities, caught up in anti-Muslim paranoia, from targeting Muslims, who also happen to be Filipino citizens, at the slightest bit of intelligence implicating them in alleged plots against national security. Since 9/11, there have been numerous raids on Muslim-dominated areas, including armed action, with little proof proffered on the validity of the charges and the guilt of those arrested.

* * *

THE LATEST incident involved the arrest of 16 Muslims at the Islamic Information Center (IIC) on Taft Avenue who were there for the Friday prayers. Law enforcement officials claimed they had intelligence that indicated there was a plan to sabotage the Feast of the Nazarene in Quiapo, which was to take place in two days. Those arrested, according to members of the Muslim community, included pilgrims going on Hajj (the annual pilgrimage to Mecca, the center of Islam), and prominent Muslim leaders, including Afghani Alonto, head of the IIC.

Alonto is the youngest son of the late Sen. Domocao Alonto and he remains under detention in Camp Crame.

"The original target was the Islamic Center on the second floor of the Abaton Building in Quiapo. However, a lawyer was present who questioned the legality of the raid since the WPD raiding team could not produce a search/arrest warrant. The raiding party then proceeded to the next center where it succeeded in arresting the 16 Muslims, including three women," says a statement signed by prominent Filipino Muslims, and including a Catholic priest based in Mindanao.

The raid on the IIC and the warrantless arrest of Muslim Filipinos, "under the guise of a war against terror," they asserted, mark a "new crackdown" on the Muslim population in Manila.

"Since 9/11, thousands of Muslims have been arrested in similar illegal raids. While most have been released, hundreds are still languishing in jails. Many of those detained have no charges filed against them. Moreover, there are documented allegations of human rights violations of our brothers and sisters in jail, including torture and sexual abuse of the women," the statement adds.

The targeting of Muslim Filipinos is not taking place in isolation. As the statement points out, the US government, in a 2002 assessment of the human rights situation in the Philippines, has pointed out "serious problems" in some areas, including extrajudicial killings, disappearances, torture and arbitrary arrest and detention, with particular attention paid to the PNP as "the worst abuser of human rights."

* * *

"WE are angered and alarmed that the Arroyo government, while it pursues peace negotiations with the MILF, allows blatant violations of the human rights of Muslims," the signatories stress.

"We demand the release of innocent Filipinos who have been detained on the pretext of being terrorists.

"We call on all peace and civil rights advocates to be on guard, be steadfast in the quest for genuine peace. Human rights must never be sacrificed in the war against terror. To do so undermines the very fabric of democracy and ensures the success of elements who threaten our society.

"We demand that all Muslim leaders in the government come forward to protect the rights and liberty of all Muslims and non-Muslim Filipinos."

Among the signatories are former Sen. Santanina Rasul, founding chair of the Muslim Women Peace Advocates Council, Amina Rasul of the Philippine Council for Islam and Democracy (PCID), other prominent Christian and Muslim leaders, Nena Undag, chair, and Mona Muktar, co-chair and other leaders of the Lumad-Moro Women Solidarity for Human Rights, and Fr. Eliseo Mercado, OMI.

* * *

AS the statement implies, at risk under the present scenario are the human rights not just of our Muslim brethren but of all Filipinos, if we remain silent and stand idly by while we allow the rights of a few to be trampled. Law enforcers may protest that as part of the "war on terror" they have been forced to take short cuts and cannot afford the niceties of legal procedures. But those procedures exist for a reason, and the protection of the individual against the powerful state is just one compelling reason.

Even more offensive is the religious and ethnic profiling employed in the course of going after alleged terrorists. Non-Muslim Filipinos may feel they have nothing to fear in a post-9/11 world, save maybe from faceless terrorists who may strike from out of nowhere. It may be the highest irony yet if the biggest threat stems not from the unseen terrorist, but from the all-powerful and ubiquitous agents of the state.

The white man's burden

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

IT may intrigue you to know that the question of who would perform the manual labor needed to develop the Philippines divided the American community in the early part of the 20th century. Most of the businessmen it seems and nearly every traveler and writer (going back to Juan de la Concepcion) thought that the islands couldn't be developed using Filipino labor. But Gov. William H. Taft, the Philippine Commission and government contractors saw danger in the importation of Chinese labor. A Dr. Brown, in their defense, stated that the Chinese were here before the Spaniards or the Americans and were more numerous than the Americans. They had intermarried and produced a more virile strain into the native blood. If they were banished, trade in the islands would collapse; they were indispensable to industry and commerce.

Taft observed that the Chinese started out as a laborer, graduated to merchant within a year or two of his arrival and then began to compete with Filipino tradesmen and, in the end, drove the latter out of business. Taft also thought that the Filipino should work out his own salvation under "friendly" guidance. If, however, after a certain period, he failed to achieve the desired end…(the sentence is left unfinished).

De la Concepcion, centuries before, felt the colony couldn't continue without the Chinese who "taught" us the principles of trade and industry as well as how to extract juice from sugarcane, how to manufacture sugar and make wrought iron. They introduced the first sugar mills with vertical stone crushers and iron boiling pans. (However, he failed to point out that they didn't introduce the wheel or the plow.)

The Chinese, wrote another American, were willing to do the work Filipinos rejected. William Taft's commission believed that even if Chinese labor hastened development, Filipinos would end up in the lowest rung. With the Chinese around, we wouldn't be induced to work and would end up "obliterated."

Rev. John Devins thought we were neither as industrious nor as lazy as we were painted to be. We shared "indolence" with all Malays, but this was due to the climate and because it wasn't really necessary then to work too hard to put food on the table. With unusual insight, he wrote that our greatest danger was "to be made the tools of politicians" and added that unless we reached a certain level socially and economically, we could not protect our own interests. To put political power into our hands would result in confusion and chaos once the Americans withdrew.

For those who frequent the bazaars of Divisoria, Quiapo and Greenhills, the observation of the Americans that, due to the proximity of China and the length of our coastline, "it would be difficult, if not impossible…to prevent smuggling" should ring a bell. The commission was referring to opium, but it might as well have been alluding to textiles, handbags, watches, DVDs and whatever else the ladies enjoy buying.

The importation of opium was granted for one year only to the highest-bidding Chinese (a bill forbade Filipinos from its use). Unlike in the Spanish times, when a street called "Fumaderos" existed in Binondo with opium dens, maintaining public smoking places was now punished by a fine and even the Chinese could smoke only at home.

Curiously, it was the Protestant ministers (not the Catholics) who opposed the bill, and a petition signed by 10,000 Chinese was submitted against its passage. In the end, another commission was established to travel around Asia to study the manner of restricting the sale and use of opium. The recommendations was to ban the importation of the drug within three years, except by the government and only for medicinal purposes. Addicts over 21 had to get a permit, an educational campaign on the evils of opium was to be launched and users would be treated for free in government hospitals.

And just in case you're wondering why the Americanization of the Philippines took hold so swiftly, it may have been due to a decree replacing Spanish priests and bishops with American ones especially in education. Since the pastors believed that Filipinos had been "fettered" by the Catholic religion, Protestant evangelists spread to all the islands.

Protestant churches begun to be constructed. The first Presbyterian church was dedicated in November 1903 and stood on the corner of Paseo Azcarraga and Calle Pescadores, the main street of San Nicolas leading to Tondo. It was built of American lumber, Oregon pine and redwood, and its principal auditorium could contain about 500 people. The lot cost $3,000 and the building and furnishings, $14,500. The Methodist Church on the other hand cost $50,000 and would be called the Knox Memorial Church. It was located on Calle Cervantes and Calle Lope de Vega in the Trozo district on the site of the old Oriental Theater. The finance committee of the Philippine Conference then secured from the government a 40-year lease on property that was part of the San Lazaro estate.

Aside from the fact that the education previously given contained a lot of religious instruction and pupils were instructed to merely repeat what the teacher said, American educators felt the curriculum to be seriously wanting in many areas.

A hundred years later, not much seems to have changed in the methodology or the content.

(Data from Rev. John Devins, "An Observer in the Philippines," 1905.)

* * *

Comments to bambiharper@yahoo.com

Flavors of the road

THE SOUND of the bells ringing never failed to excite me 20 years ago. For that meant the ice cream vendor was coming and I would have a treat, courtesy of my grandmother who always had a few coins ready.

The ice cream came in three different colors, making the frosty treat even more attractive to my young eyes. I couldn't even describe or distinguish the flavor that each color represented. The only thing that I knew and the only thing that mattered was that I loved the taste of the cone of ice cream I held in my little hands.

YOUNG BLOOD

Ruel P. Pagoto

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

The *sorbetero*, who must have been in his mid-30s, was always clad in off-white shorts and shirt. He had a small towel hanging from his neck which he used to wipe the sweat off his face and forehead. He didn't seem to care about the heat of the sun, the rough road and the dust every time a vehicle passed by. In his rubber slippers, he would continue to push his ice cream cart until I lost sight of him. In my innocent mind, I pictured many other little boys and girls lining the street and waiting for him to have a taste of the "flavors of the road."

That was the highlight of my day, until I turned 6 years old and I was enrolled in the public elementary school. Then I missed grandma a lot, but I needed to be in school with my mother (a teacher) so that I could prepare to face the future.

My elementary school days were quite memorable, especially the recognition days when grandmother would proudly pin those blue ribbons symbolic of academic excellence on my shirt.

I was in junior year in high school when grandma passed away. That was my first taste of bitterness and sorrow.

But, of course, life went on. The time came for me to leave and enroll in college in a nearby town. I went home every weekend then, unaware that it was my initial training in overcoming homesickness. It was as well the start of my struggles to understand and adjust to the different personalities in the dormitory and in the university. Indeed, college days aren't just about earning a degree, but also learning about human relationships.

It was very painful to get my first incomplete grade, but the pain would have been less if I deserved it. Only my professor knew why I deserved that grade, since I had completed all the requirements and passed every test he gave.

In my senior year, crisis struck. By then my younger brother was also in college and I needed a little more money for my thesis and my internship.

But the real crisis in our family was not really about money. I could hardly bear to see my mother with tears flowing down her cheeks almost every time she saw me coming home. It was as if she was telling me that as the eldest among her three children, I had become her primary source of strength and hope amid the most bitter and difficult times of her life.

Both of my parents tried to continue to lend me their moral support during my senior year, even though a third party was gradually breaking up their marriage. But no matter how hard they tried, I still felt empty and their efforts just weren't enough.

I graduated and then passed the veterinary licensure examination three years ago. Left with no other employment opportunity, I then accepted a job that paid the minimum wage and took me far from my hometown. With modest pay and the high standard of living in Luzon, it was to make both ends meet. My brother and sister needed financial support. Although nobody asked for it, I understood that I needed to help my mother who had started to act as both father and a mother to us, especially after my father died.

I found it difficult to adjust to life in Metro Manila and Luzon. I hated the traffic. I had to speak Filipino properly or face ridicule from everyone around. I also had to deal with loneliness during special days and holidays since I couldn't afford to purchase a plane ticket to Mindanao. Instead of going home, I would just send the money for my fare to my family.

I also had to face the reality that a newly licensed veterinarian still has to undergo further training, and that I have to chalk up a lot of experience before I can fulfill my dream of becoming an expert in my chosen field. I have to be patient enough to take every single stride on my journey and overcome the obstacles I meet along the way.

The workplace is indeed the real world! I have come to realize that I must not only learn how to restrain animals but also how to handle people as well. Animals can be tamed easily, but people are very difficult to train. An animal can be my best friend, but a man can be both my friend and foe.

Recently, I decided to go on vacation and decided to spend it at home so that I could renew my bonds with my family and friends. And truly there is no place like home.

Once I was sitting all alone inside our house when I heard bells ringing. I was so excited to hear that sound again. When I turned my eyes to the asphalt road, I saw the *sorbetero* all right, but this time, he was riding a bicycle with a side carriage for his ice cream containers. Now, he had five flavors of ice cream, each coming in a different color. I picked up some bills from my wallet and bought all five flavors. And this time, I could describe and distinguish the different flavors of the road.

Just like the *sorbetero*, my life has undergone changes, and even though they have not been great, my life has improved. I guess those little boys and little girls who once waited, like me, for the *sorbetero* have also experienced life's ups and downs like me. As I watched him pedal away until he was out of my sight, I knew we would continue to encounter a lot of hurdles on the road of life.

But there will also be a lot of flavors for us to savor along the way, each one coming in a different color. But to enjoy them fully, we need genuine faith in the Almighty, self-motivation, self-confidence, patience and perseverance so that we can achieve our ultimate goal.

Ruel P. Pagoto, 25, graduated from the University of Southern Mindanao in Kabacan, Cotabato. He now works for Monterey Foods Corp.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

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A nation ruled by an oligarchy

DOES being a citizen of this country mean anything? Someone should have raised this question long ago, way back when we had just shrugged off the colonial yoke, or back when we first took over governance as an "independent" nation. Because it turns out that nothing has changed politically. Filipinos remain as before—utterly helpless vis-à-vis their government. They cannot influence it, they have no voice in it and those in office won't allow it.

Citizenship is supposed to mean being the repository of sovereignty, the wellspring of state authority. That's what the Constitution says. The will of the people is supposed to shape the conduct of government and guide the officeholders. That's how it's supposed to be. But is there any Filipino today who is neither in government nor related to a taipan who can honestly say he has influence upon the acts of government?

The painful truth is, Filipinos are ruled by an oligarchy. Except for the right to vote exercised every three years, the Filipino is but a spectator, watching helplessly as officials drive the economy into the ground and the political system to the madhouse.

During elections, politicians extol the act of voting as the supreme expression of sovereignty. No one can quarrel with this assertion. But it begs the question: why should sovereignty be reduced to one solitary act every three years? The right of suffrage is the merest entitlement to citizenship. It is not the totality of a citizen's role. After casting a ballot, which may not even be counted, then what? And what if most other votes are manipulated through bribery, coercion or outright cheating? It is so wrong to restrict sovereignty to an act that may not even count.

Sovereignty must have a voice, a venue and a procedure for expression as often as it may please a citizen to affirm it. In mature democracies, sovereignty has multiple incarnations, year in and year out—citizen assemblies, town hall meetings, public hearings, village gatherings, media forums; and between elections—primaries, party caucuses, conventions, public debates, district or parish consultations. In every case, the citizen is afforded the spotlight, as are his ideas and opinions. Thus, is he able to influence official conduct and the public agenda. Citizen participation is the linchpin of a vibrant and stable democracy.

It can't just be opinion polls or surveys, or slogans and self-gratuitous claims of public approval. There must be dynamic exchange, community dialogue and democratic interaction in a level field for true democracy to obtain.

Now, where in our society does anything of the sort take place? No wonder millions of Filipinos take to foreign shores seeking a meaning in citizenship and the entitlements that should accrue to a citizen. Meanwhile taxes are rising, prices are soaring and the Filipino giveth while his government taketh away. Is this all there is to being a Filipino citizen?

—MANUEL E. VALDEHUESA JR.,
former Unesco executive
secretary and secretary general
of the Association of Southeast
Asian Publishers and
of the National Union
of Christian Democrats

LETTERS

Foul logic

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo wants to pardon former Rep. Romeo Jalosjos to pay a political debt. No ifs, ands, or buts about it.

What about the hundreds of inmates who have served their time and are waiting for their absolute pardon so they can get their lives back on track and into the mainstream of society as dictated by law? Why has she refused to sign their pardon?

Ex-convicts need absolute pardon to remove the stigma of their past and to start a new life. But the Palace would rather concentrate on one rich, powerful man who abused a young, defenseless, innocent girl. Where is the justice here? What we see here is the foul logic of this terribly corrupt (morally and financially) government?

—JOHN LAMMOGLIA,
Los Angeles, California, USA

AFP Modernization Fund accounted for under FVR

WE refer to the Jan. 6 INQUIRER column of Juan Mercado, particularly the statement that "under President Fidel Ramos, the Armed Forces Modernization Fund (AMF) disappeared without a trace, leaving soldiers with worn-out boots, shoddy uniforms and tin helmets."

All aspects of the AMF have practically been raised and fully discussed over the past years in countless fora. The matter was heard exhaustively before the House of Representatives and was in fact pursued relentlessly by the Estrada administration. At the end of the day, all those who alleged that the AMF "disappeared" during the Ramos administration were proven wrong.

In any event, please allow us to restate the basic facts:

1. The amount of P5.484 billion (representing 35 percent of the AMF) remitted by the Bases Conversion Development Authority to the National Treasury was placed in a special account earmarked for the program. This is reflected in the Journal of the Bureau of Treasury.

2. On April 30, 1998, barely two weeks before the national elections, the AFP advised the Office of the President of its readiness to manage the trust fund for the AMF. Prudence dictated that the handling, management and use of the trust fund be left to the incoming administration.

3. During the Estrada administration, the AMF was relegated to a low priority. In a letter to then Defense Secretary Orlando Mercado dated July 21, 1998, former Budget Secretary Benjamin Diokno stated that: "The release of the said amount as requested by the AFP cannot be effected." This was based on a well-publicized Cabinet decision on "Measures to Reduce FY 1998 Budget Deficit" which categorically stated that "the AFP Modernization will be postponed for a better time when the financial crisis is over or the Program can be continuously pursued."

4. On May 29, 2000, the Department of Budget and Management issued Special Allotment Release Order (Saro) BMB No. IC-00-0277 to the AFP for P5.4 billion. On June 26, 2000 and Aug. 21, 2000, Diokno approved the release of and disbursed funds from the AMF under "Notice of Cash Allocation" Nos. 112694-1 and 113219-1.

5. In fine, the issuance of the aforesaid Saro and NCA positively established two things: first, that the AMF was fully accounted for and remained intact at the end of the Ramos administration; second, that the Estrada administration exercised control and management over the fund.

—FRUMENCIO A. LAGUSTAN,
spokesperson of former
President Fidel V. Ramos,
120 Maria Cristina St.,
Ayala Alabang Village, Muntinlupa City

'Korin,' not 'Korean'

IN MY letter to the editor published in the Jan. 5 issue of the INQUIRER, there was a glaring mistake in the second paragraph which stated: "...at the Korean Palace in Tokyo in 1971."

Kindly correct. Instead of "Korean," it should have been "Korin."

—MANUEL L. MORATÓ,
Doña Consuelo Bldg.,
192-194 Tomas B. Morató Avenue,
Quezon City

Wrong direction

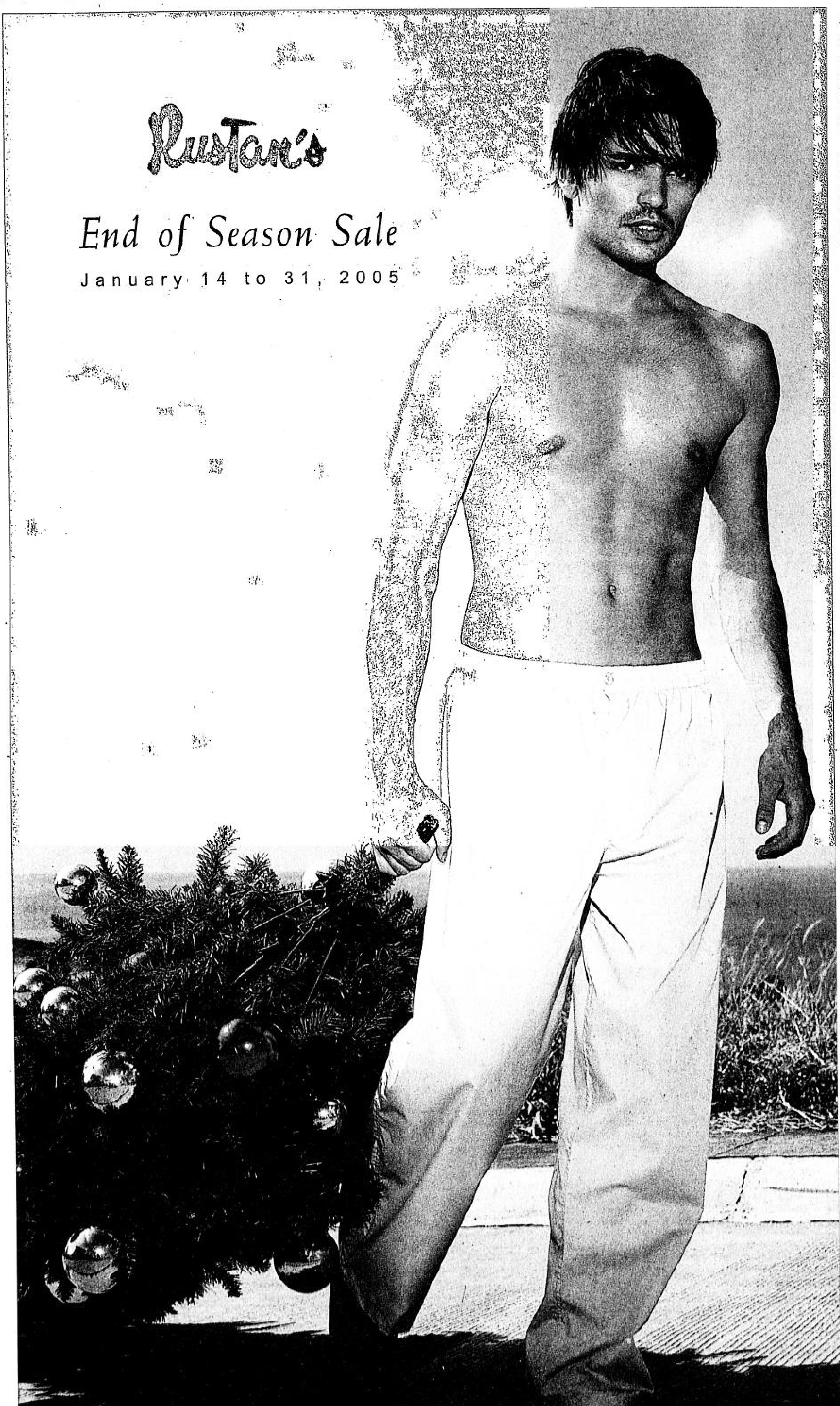
THE REMOVAL of fiscal incentives granted to cooperatives by the government is a move in the wrong direction. What will be the incentives then for the existence of cooperatives? None.

The Department of Finance official who is pushing for the lifting of all incentives for the cooperatives is either misinformed or simply ignorant of what cooperatives have done and accomplished in our country.

When the President calls for unity and hard work to build a "strong" republic, she does not mean to dismantle or discourage existing people's organizations such as the cooperatives. This finance official must realize that cooperatives exist to "unite" our people to work together for the country's progress, not to solve the fiscal crisis. By abolishing cooperatives, the poor farmers will no longer have access to fiscal incentives.

Going after cooperatives will only set us back and the fiscal crisis will never be solved. Instead of nitpicking on cooperatives, the solution is for the finance officials to do their mandate and fight graft and corruption at all levels of society. This includes the corporate irregularities that deprive government of taxes.

—SERGIO J. MONTINOLA,
4 Saturn St., Bel Air 2,
Makati City



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Bomb found in Cotabato cathedral

COTABATO CITY—A bomb was found at the sacristy of the Immaculate Conception Cathedral here yesterday.

Supt. Mipunod Maruhom, acting city police chief, said the explosive was fashioned from a 60 mm mortar with accessories and a timing device.

Fr. Jun Gumban, DCC, assistant parish priest, said an unidentified woman handed over a lunch box containing the explosive covered with rice last Sunday evening.

"We did not know it was a bomb because we noticed (that) the plastic container contained rice," Father Gumban told the INQUIRER.

A bomb expert said the explosive was complete with accessories but the one who assembled it failed to install the initiator.

An initiator is the one that would trigger the blasting cap to explode and subsequently, the 60 mm mortar.

Father Gumban said the guard handed over the lunch box to a certain Dina, the church caretaker, who brought the explosive to the sacristy. Dina forgot to bring the lunch box to the kitchen on Sunday so it was left at the sacristy.

A sacristy is located at the back of the altar where the priest prepares for Mass.

At 9:45 a.m. yesterday, Dina was cleaning the sacristy when she noticed the lunch box. She opened it and saw the spoiled rice. Then she saw electrical wiring under the spoiled rice that forced her to run and report her discovery to Father Gumban.

A bomb expert said it was meant to harm and inflict injuries but the maker failed to complete the bomb-making process.

The bomb's discovery follows a debate in this city over the legal process that is emerging following the arrest of suspected terrorists in Manila.

The Philippine National Police, that rounded up 17 Muslim occupants of the Islamic Foundation Center on Friday in Manila, faces a case of a state prosecutor confronting a government legal counsel defending the accused.

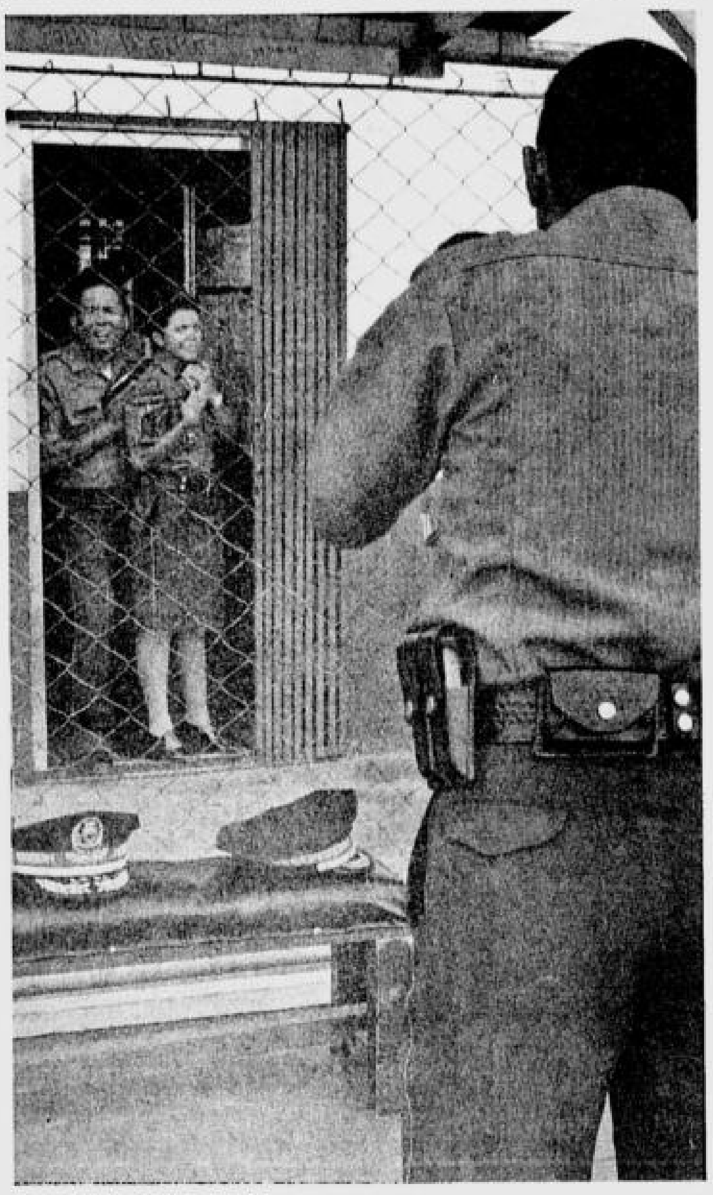
The PNP later charged only two of the suspects with illegal possession of firearms and explosives.

It will be a court battle between the government against the government with the involvement of lawyer Naguib Sinarimbo of the Office on Muslim Affairs (OMA), an agency directly under the Office of the President.

Sinarimbo on Wednesday said he has been instructed by OMA Executive Director Zamzamin Ampatuan "to extend legal assistance" to the accused, Afgani Alonto and Leonardo Ricalde.

Asked whether the OMA legal aid in this case would not contravene a government policy, the Maguindanao lawyer said "since the accused are Muslims, the office (OMA) is mandated to help."

Besides, he said, one of those originally arrested by the raiding team was Dr. Arab Aguam, former administrator of the Golden Mosque in Quiapo, Manila and currently an OMA consultant on religious matters. *Edwin Fernandez and Charlie Señase, PDI Mindanao Bureau*



HOSTAGE DRAMA TROY MALCOLM/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU
Davao City policemen act out a hostage drama in a demonstration of how they would deal with a hostage crisis. The policewoman acting the part of the hostage victim could consider herself lucky that her being taken hostage was not for real.

Ceasefire for relief work sought

LUCENA CITY—Relief workers from the Philippine National Red Cross in the calamity-stricken areas of northern Quezon and Aurora provinces have called for a six-month ceasefire between communist rebels and government forces to allow unhampered relief and rehabilitation operations.

Sen. Richard Gordon, PNRC chair, said there should be a cessation of armed hostilities from January to June in the typhoon-ravaged towns of Real, Infanta and General Nakar in Quezon and the municipalities of Dingalan, Baler, San Luis and Maria Aurora in Aurora.

Gordon said the rehabilitation work should be safeguarded, uninterrupted and facilitated to allow the safe, secure and unimpeded flow of resources and efforts.

"We are hoping, too, that the ceasefire will provide a ray of hope that peace may after all result from this tragedy," he added.

"It's just that for people who have nothing left, help cannot wait," the senator said in a statement.

But communist spokesperson Gregorio "Ka Roger" Rosal, appeared not receptive to the proposed ceasefire.

"We're not used to a long ceasefire period. It will be hard to observe a six-month ceasefire with the government since the enemy forces do not always honor the agreement," he said in a mobile phone interview.

"But we're open to a long negotiated truce, which needs to be formally discussed between government peace representatives and the NDF panel," Rosal said.

He advised the PNRC official to bring the matter to Malacañang.

"But as far as the revolutionary movement is concerned, we assure the PNRC that they can freely conduct relief and rehabilitation operations as long as there are no armed government personnel that will be involved," he said.

Maj. Jose Broso, spokesperson of the military's Southern Luzon Command based here in Camp Nakar, said the government declaration of a ceasefire is always a "political decision."

"The military will abide by whatever is the decision of the country's political leadership," Broso said.

The PNRC-proposed ceasefire came at the end of the unilateral holiday season ceasefire made by the communist-led National Democratic Front and the government.

Gordon cited a similar ceasefire agreed upon by government and rebel forces in Aceh and Sri Lanka following the Dec. 26 killer tsunamis that killed thousands of people from at least 11 countries.

"This (ceasefire proposal) is part of a well-established international tradition of 'humanitarian pauses' and 'corridors of tranquility,'" Gordon said. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Marcos grave to get free supply of power

LAOAG CITY—A local power company has put an end to the recurring problem of collecting delayed payments for the mausoleum housing the remains of strongman Ferdinand Marcos by providing free power supply to the crypt permanently.

The Ilocos Norte Electric Cooperative's (Inec) board of directors approved a resolution last week allowing free power supply to the mausoleum in the Marcos family compound in Batac town.

"We deemed it fit to provide free power supply in due recognition to the late President as the acknowledged father of rural electric cooperatives," Ernesto Abara, Inec director, said.

Abara said the measure was also seen as a solution to the problem of having to collect mounting unpaid bills from the Marcoses each time their accounts fall due.

Inec has been pressing the Marcoses to pay their bills since 1996 when the family's ancestral home in Batac began incurring debts that date back to 1986, when the family was driven out of Malacañang after the civilian-backed military uprising at Edsa.

Abara said the Inec's move did not sit well with other power consumers who had criticized the company for the selective implementation of its non-payment, immediate-disconnection policy.

When told that some consumers were angry because Inec was providing free power to those who could afford to pay, Abara said: "Since we are also taken to task for cutting the power to the (structure housing the) late President's remains, we might as well make the supply free of charge."

He said only the mausoleum's power supply would be given free while the Marcos mansion's power line would be billed separately. Power to the Marcos mausoleum and mansion was previously fused in one line.

According to Inec, power usage to the mausoleum, amounting to P20,000 monthly, will not be passed on to consumers but will be reflected as the company's system loss.

Abara said Inec and the Marcoses signed an agreement that power to the mansion would be disconnected promptly should the family fail to pay the bill.

Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said his family was grateful to Inec for providing free power to the Marcos mausoleum.

He said the gesture would also put the issue to rest. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Tuguegarao folk mourn, rage over rape, slaying

By Estanislao Caldez
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

TUGUEGARAO CITY—This city is mourning and angry at the rape and murder of a sophomore student of the Cagayan National High School on Friday.

Archbishop Diosdado Talamayan of the Diocese of Tuguegarao led residents in condemning the killing of Dinaroe Ancheta, 14, whose naked body was found on Saturday last week near the Cagayan provincial capitol here.

He urged the police to be more efficient in solving crimes in the city.

Two suspects in Ancheta's slay, both teenagers and tricycle drivers in the city, were arrested by the police in Barangay Bagumbayan in Tuao town on Thursday morning.

One of the suspects has pending criminal cases.

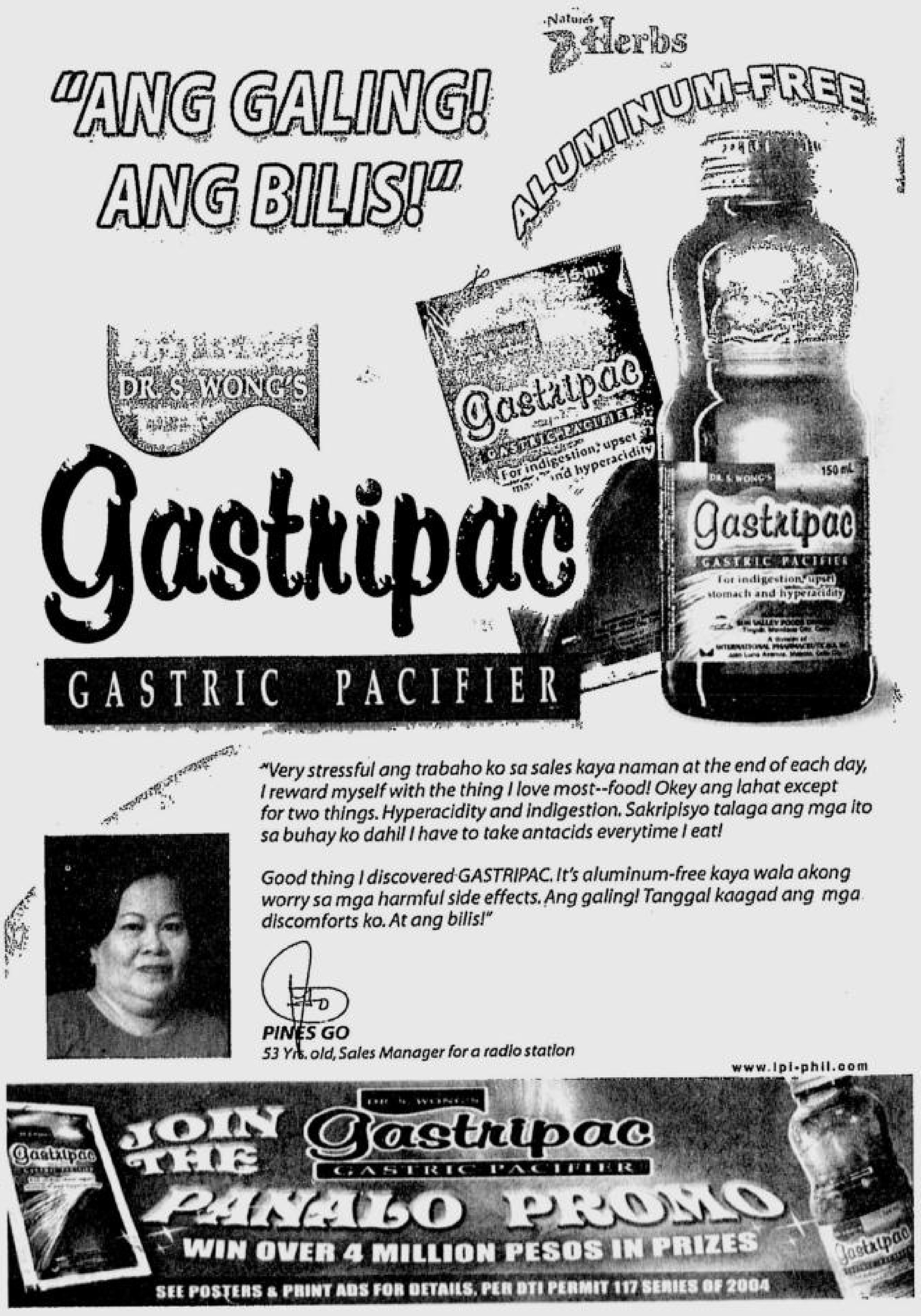
Mayor Randolph Ting said he and Cagayan Gov. Edgar Lara are offering P100,000 as reward for any information on the suspects.

Police said Ancheta was last seen alive on Friday afternoon aboard a tricycle. She was on her way home with two classmates.

Ancheta's parents reported her missing after she failed to come home on Friday night.

Police found Ancheta's body on a road shoulder in Capitol Hills here. Her arms and legs were maimed and her body bore cigarette burns. Police said a bottle was inserted in her sex organ.

Police established the identities of the suspects based on information provided by the owner of the tricycle.



"Very stressful ang trabaho ko sa sales kaya naman at the end of each day, I reward myself with the thing I love most--food! Okey ang lahat except for two things. Hyperacidity and indigestion. Sakripisyo talaga ang mga ito sa buhay ko dahil I have to take antacids everytime I eat!

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IN MENINGO'S WAKE

Baguio flower fest faces postponement

BAGUIO CITY—The vastly-popular Baguio Flower Festival or Panagbenga, which normally starts after Valentine's Day, will have to be postponed, if the Department of Health will have its way.

"Our advice is that it wouldn't hurt to postpone it for a couple of weeks," Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit said here.

Dayrit's main reason for the postponement is more on "psychological disposition" more than the fear of more meningococcal cases because of the crowded places which the festival will generate and which the health department is now warning against.

"If the perception of risk is very high, even if you prepared well, no one will come," he said.

Mayor Braulio Yaranon said that they would abide by the advice of health personnel but said that he would wait until Jan. 17 to give his announcement.

This year's Panagbenga is scheduled Feb. 19-28.

On Monday, the city will have its 10th day when no Baguio resident has contracted the disease and the DOH can then lower the meningococcemia alert imposed on the city.

Dr. Florence Reyes, head of the Baguio health department, said from Jan. 8-14, there were no cases of meningococcemia.

Other cases

For the last 13 days, however, there were six suspected cases and two laboratory-confirmed cases.

Meningococcemia cases have also surfaced in other parts of the country.

NO FEAR! MENINGO... IS OUTTA HERE
AGUIO
ASS ATION
RESTAURANT

BAGUIO restaurant owners join a rally to declare the city safe from meningococcemia in a bid to woo back visitors to the northern resort city.

PDI NORTHERN LUZON BUREAU

In Cotabato City, health authorities said six persons who died recently had signs of meningococcemia.

Dr. Abdullah Dumama, City Health Officer, said all six victims had no prior record of meningococcemia infection but blood clots in their bodies were a symptom of the disease.

Dr. Annie Silongan, director of the Cotabato Regional Medical Center, confirmed yesterday that there was one case of meningoccemia in the city, but the patient survived.

Another meningococcemia case was reported Wednesday in nearby Sultan Kudarat, Maguindanao by Dr. Lampa Pandi, regional secretary of the Department of Health in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.

Blood clots

Two of the six who died of suspected meningococcemia in Cotabato City died in their sleep and their bodies and neck bore blood clots, although Dumama said the presence of hematoma was inconclusive of meningococcemia.

The four others who died lived in the same subdivision as the two and their relatives said they saw similar marks in their bodies.

In Puerto Princesa, officials took steps to project a meningococcemia-free city in preparation for the peak of the tourism season.

The city government met with local health officials, workers and convened the city disaster coordinating council to draw a plan to counter meningococcemia and to prevent a scare.

"An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure," said Dr. Alma Rivera, officer in charge of the Ospital ng Palawan.

Rivera and other health officials have been visiting local radio stations to educate the public about meningococcemia.

The Ospital ng Palawan has prepared two isolation rooms for suspected meningococcemia patients.

There is also an apparatus that could be used to detect the presence of meningococcemia or other virus in saliva or blood.

Rivera said the apparatus was donated by the Japan International Cooperation Agency to the provincial government but it has not been put to use yet. *Frank Cimatu, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau; and Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Quarry income down by half under Lapid son

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Doubts on the capability of Gov. Mark Lapid to lead have surfaced after the total collections from the quarry industry in 2004 reached only P10.5 million, which is 52 percent of the P20 million target.

"We are actually very disappointed with the level of the collection," Vice Gov. Joseller Guiao said of the reaction of the provincial board.

Of the P10.5 million, the net revenues of the provincial government amounted to only P8.5 million. The rest were distributed as shares of the towns and villages where Mt. Pinatubo's sand were hauled from.

Little revenues from quarry hardly solve the local fiscal woes and the big dependence on the national government. The provincial government does not see any increase in expenditures for social services and infrastructures this year, Guiao said.

"We will have to make do again with P777 million, which was last year's budget," he said.

In the 2004 budget, about P630 million came as internal revenue allotment or the local government's share from the national income.

The budget needed a 10 to 15 percent increase to support social services especially, it was learned.

Guiao said the provincial board had asked budget officer Nida Manalad and treasurer Vergel Yabut to explain the reasons for the low quarry revenue collection.

Lapid, the youngest governor in the country, could not be reached for comment. He left for the United States on Jan. 8 reportedly for an investment campaign in cities with large Filipino communities.

Provincial administrator Fidel Arcenas said Lapid vowed to improve the quarry income this year through improvements in the monitoring and collection system.

The governor's father, now Sen. Manuel Lapid, managed the quarry task force until he finished his third and last term in 2004.

Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

INQUIRER Visayas

E-mail: inq_cebu@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Jun Bandayrel
Bureau Chief Edralyn L. Benedicto

Killings, calamities and triumphs

YEARENDER

FIRST, the bad news: Three media practitioners and a feisty woman lawyer felled by assassins' bullets. Sensational killings sow fear in otherwise peaceful communities. An erstwhile Marcos ally acquitted of the murder of one of the fallen heroes in the fight against the Marcos dictatorship. A multibillion-peso shabu laboratory uncovered in Cebu.

Now, the good news: The young conjoined twins from Negros Occidental finally separated, captivating the hearts of Filipinos here and abroad. An Ilonggo taxi driver in New York brought joy and pride to Filipinos after he was hailed "New York's most honest taxi driver." A self-effacing and relatively unknown young Boholana captured the hearts of jurors of the Metro Manila Film Festival.

And depending on which side you are on, the biggest event of 2004 that drew national attention to the Visayas, particularly in Cebu, was the May elections that saw Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo winning the presidency amid allegations of massive fraud.

It was in Cebu that Ms Arroyo got a margin of over 1 million votes over her nearest rival, Fernando Poe Jr. It was in Cebu that the President, breaking tradition, held her oath-taking rites. And, for the first time, in the post war era, the Office of the President found a second home in Cebu, via the Malacañang sa Sugbo.

These are just some of the more interesting events that happened in the Visayas in 2004.

Sensational killings

SENSATIONAL killings shattered the relative peace of Western Visayas in 2004, especially in Aklan.

Three foreigners and a Filipino were murdered in a mansion on Boracay Island in May, shocking the expat community in the renowned island-resort. A German, Uwe Friesl, has been indicted for the murders of fellow German Anton Forstenhausler, Swiss-born vineyard owner Manfred Schoeni, Hong Kong-based architect John James Cowperthwaite, and Forstenhausler's Filipino maid Erma Sarmiento.

Resort and restaurant owners and Boracay residents feared that the killings, the worst crime to have happened in Boracay in recent years, would scare away tourists. But tourists, both foreign and local, continued to flock to the resort.

- On Aug. 15, armed men ambushed Daniel "Ka Mokong" Batoy, Western Visayas commander of the breakaway Revolutionary Proletarian Army-Alex Boncayao Brigade (RPA-ABB), and his 16-year-old daughter Diana Jane in Makato town in Aklan.

The Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) and its armed wing, the New People's Army (NPA), owned up the killings, saying Batoy was "punished" for allegedly conniving with the military but that the death of Diana Jane was unintentional.

- The following months saw two more high-profile murders in Aklan. Herson "Boy" Hinolan, station manager of Bombo Radyo Kalibo, was gunned down near a carnival in the capital town of Kalibo on Nov 13. He died two days later. Police have tagged Mayor Fred Arsenio of Lezo town in Aklan as the alleged gunman. Arsenio, a retired soldier, has denied the charge.

Hinolan's murder roused the media community in the region to close ranks in condemning the murder and demanding justice.

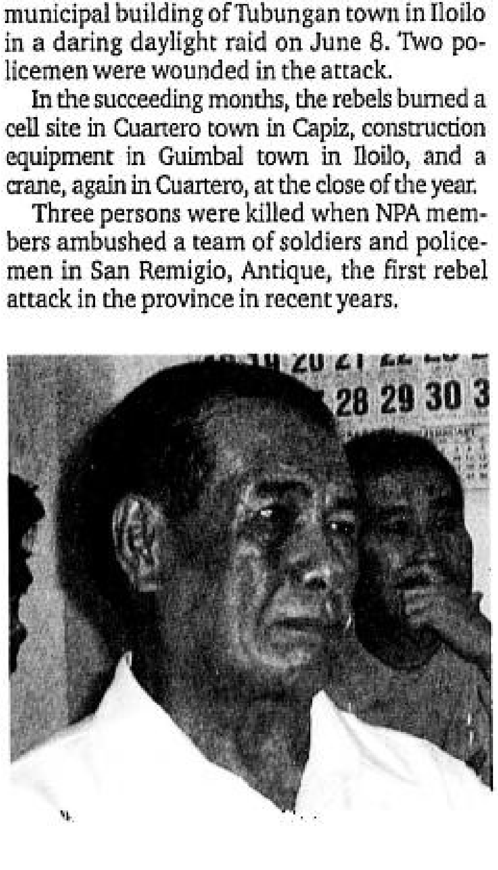
A week later, lawyer Edgar Calizo Sr. was gunned down in front of his house in Kalibo. Police have tagged a squad leader of the RPA-ABB for the killing. The lawyer had handled controversial cases, including land disputes and the Boracay killings.

- The NPA stepped up attacks against government troops and companies that refused to pay "revolutionary taxes."

The rebels overran the police station and municipal building of Tubungan town in Iloilo in a daring daylight raid on June 8. Two policemen were wounded in the attack.

In the succeeding months, the rebels burned a cell site in Cuartero town in Capiz, construction equipment in Guimbal town in Iloilo, and a crane, again in Cuartero, at the close of the year.

Three persons were killed when NPA members ambushed a team of soldiers and policemen in San Remigio, Antique, the first rebel attack in the province in recent years.



PACIFICADOR NESTOR P. BURGOS, JR.

ILOILO journalists light candles as they mourn the killings of journalists. CHRIS FERNANDEZ/CONTRIBUTOR

- The case of the 18-year-old murder of former Antique Gov. Evelio Javier was finally resolved. In a controversial decision handed down on Oct. 12, Presiding Judge Rudy Castrojas of the Antique Regional Trial Court Branch 12 acquitted the alleged mastermind, former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador, and three others.

Castrojas, however, found guilty lawyer Avelino "Bob" Javellana and seven others, mostly security personnel of Pacificador.

Javier's family and supporters decried the decision, but Pacificador's supporters praised it.

Despite the killings, despair and violence, the celebration of life and living continued.

- Ilonggo Nestor Sulpico brought joy and pride to Filipinos after he was cited "New York's most honest taxi driver" for returning $70,000 worth of black pearls left by a passenger in a backpack in his cab on July 14. When he came home in August, he was treated to a hero's welcome by officials and fellow Ilonggos.

- The series of operations to separate conjoined twins Carl and Clarence Aguirre in New York captivated the hearts of Filipinos. Negrenses and Ilonggos prayed for the boys throughout the 10-month process.

The twins from Talisay City in Negros Occidental were finally separated on Aug. 4. *Nestor P. Burgos Jr.*

'Historic events,' assassinations

CEBU found itself in the center of post-election controversy amid allegations of systematic fraud that allowed President Macapagal-Arroyo to gain a margin of more than one million votes over closest rival, actor Fernando Poe Jr.

Despite the efforts of the supporters of Poe to prove their charges, including parading masked men who supposedly witnessed fraudulent poll acts of the administration, the controversy was shunted aside, even by independent watch groups who declared no such massive fraud marred the political exercise.

Amid all these, the Cebuanos reveled in hosting a "historic" event on June 30 when the President and her running mate, Vice President Noli de Castro, decided to take their oaths of office in Cebu, before Chief Justice Hilario Davide, the same magistrate who swore then Vice President Macapagal-Arroyo into the presidency after the Edsa II uprising that forced Joseph Estrada to step down from the presidency in 2000.

- The election controversy was preceded by an exposé involving the Perdido Lex foundation, a bogus organization that had obtained at least P4 million in government funds, mainly from the office of then Cebu Vice Gov. Gregory Osmeña, supposedly to finance a computer education program to various schools in the province.

The scam proved to be the undoing of Osmeña who, once touted as the new shining political star of the already star-studded Osmeña clan, lost in his bid for governor.

- It was a year of triumphs for both the police and the Bureau of Customs in its antismuggling and antidrug campaigns.

On Jan. 26, the antismuggling task force of the Bureau of Customs seized five container vans of smuggled chickens from Canada worth P25 million.

On March 5, agents of the Philippine Drugs Enforcement Agency and the Bureau of Customs seized 60 drums (1,740 kg) of pseudoephedrine, an ingredient for the manufacture of shabu. This was followed up by a major victory on Sept. 25, when PDEA agents uncovered a billion-peso shabu laboratory in Mandaue City, said to be one of the biggest in Asia.

As the New Year began, eight foreigners and four Filipinos were finally charged in court and could face the death penalty for setting the three "mega" shabu laboratories in Mandaue.

Also charged before the regional trial court were the five owners of the warehouse where the antinarcotic agents recovered P1.3 billion worth of shabu.

- During the last quarter, the Cebuanos mourned the gruesome slaying of lawyer Arbet Sta. Ana-Yongco, who was shot dead inside her house and law office in Barangay Zapatera, Cebu City, on Oct. 11.

Yongco was the private prosecutor in the parricide case against cult leader Ruben Ecleo Jr., who, in March, was granted temporary liberty by a Cebu court after posting a P1-million bail.

A month later, on Nov. 27, it was the turn of the Cebu media to mourn when an assassin killed one of their colleagues, photojournalist Allan Dizon, a staff member of The Freeman.

Amid the tragedies, however, the year ended with the country asking "who is Rebecca Lusterio?" The young self-effacing Boholana won the best supporting trophy award in the post-Christmas awarding rites of the Metro Manila Film Festival for her portrayal in "Panaghoy Sa Suba," the first commercial Cebuano film to be made in over 30 years. *Jolene Bulambot*

Rising from the mud

EASTERN Visayas ushered in 2004, still reeling from the disaster on Panaon Island where a tidal wave, landslide and flooding killed more than 100 persons, destroyed crops and property, and displaced hundreds of people.

On Jan. 15, then Environment Secretary Elisea Gozun and Southern Leyte Gov. Rosette Y. Lerias approved and adopted the three-year Panaon Island Rehabilitation Plan, which complemented the "Oplan Bag-ong Panaon." As the year ended, these programs, that included the construction of housing units for the victims and reforestation projects, have given new hope and allowed the victims to rebuild their lives from the mud.

- Four typhoons—"Gener," "Dindo," "Yoyong," and "Unding"—hit the region, resulting in the death of 19 persons and the destruction of crops and infrastructure facilities worth P200 million.

- Unsolved killings included the shooting in Calbayog City of the mayor of Tarangnan, Samar, in March, a top drug suspect in Borongan, Eastern Samar, and a militant labor leader in Tacloban City.

Communist rebels killed a young Army lieutenant, a member of Philippine Military Academy Class 2002, in an encounter in the hinterland of Oras, Eastern Samar, on July 2. They also killed two policemen and three workers of the Philippine National Oil Co. in an ambush at Tongonan, Ormoc City, on March 26.

- The region's coconut industry was devastated by the *cadang-cadang* disease, the abaca industry by the mosaic and bunchy top diseases, and the shrimp industry by the white spot syndrome virus. The year ended with still no remedies. In the P300-million shrimp industry alone, the Bureau of Fisheries reported a 60-percent loss in income.

- When the political dust settled after the May 11 elections, many of the old political faces and their kin found themselves still in their posts.

- The Philippine National Police was busy hunting down members of notorious kidnap gangs operating in Metro Manila but natives of the region. Seven suspects were eventually arrested.

Police also bagged several drug lords in the region. *Vicente S. Labro and Joey A. Gabieta*

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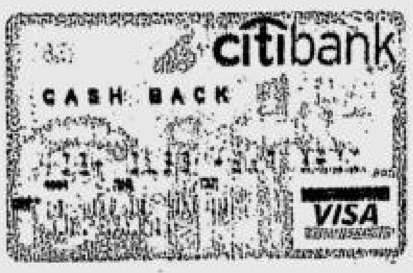

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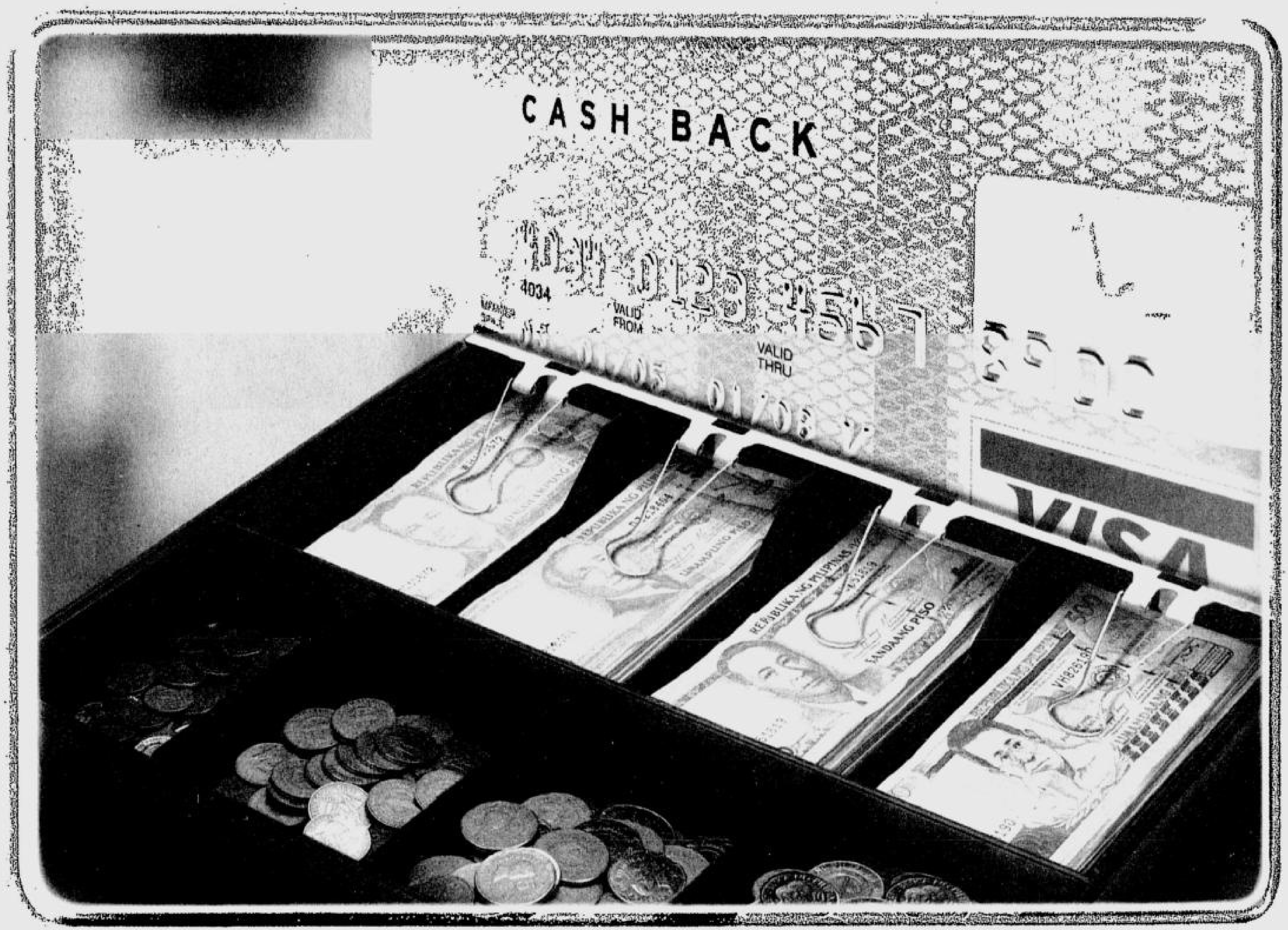

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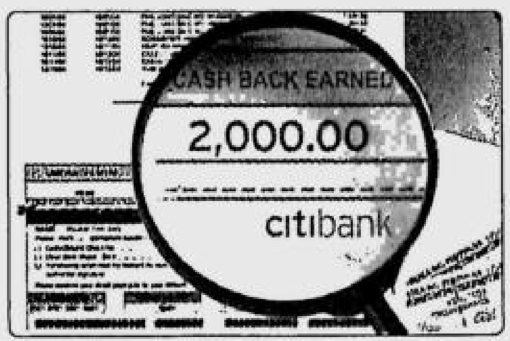

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Erap vows to unify GMA foes

From page A1

cudero (NPC, Sorsogon) told the INQUIRER when asked if such gatherings might be construed as part of swirling talk about alleged destabilization plots against the Arroyo administration.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez previously claimed that certain people in the opposition had planned an uprising against the government which would have coincided with last month's funeral for Poe.

Citing intelligence reports, Gonzalez said that though the plan might fizzle out for lack of popular support, another attempt might be pulled off by either February—when the country marks the anniversary of the 1986 Edsa Revolt—or in May to mark the anniversary of the May 1, 2001 failed uprising by Estrada supporters.

Presenting platform

Opposition leaders present during the Makati assembly included Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan.

While the next national and local elections are still two years away, Escudero said that "we just wanted to present our platform."

Asked if they were promoting the same platform offered by Poe in the May 10 presidential elections, Escudero said: "Gringo made some modifications to it but it's basically the same."

Honasan, a former Army colonel who figured in bloody coup attempts against the Aquino administration in the 1980s, was the architect of a reform agenda which supposedly inspired the failed Magdalo military putsch in Makati in 2003.

People's concerns

"No, we just want to hear the people's concerns at the grass roots," Escudero said, when pressed whether or not the conduct of such assemblies were advance preparations for the 2007 polls.

Escudero said the Makati assembly last Thursday showed what were the major concerns of the ordinary man on the street.

"High electricity rates. The prospect of more and higher taxes. Even the lack of electoral reforms as no computerization has been implemented especially in the last elections," Escudero said.

He stressed that the opposition had long planned to hold such grass-roots assemblies.

"The plan is to have two assemblies each week. Initially, these will be in Metro Manila. But we'll be going out later," Escudero said.

Meeting with Ping, Zamora

In Hong Kong, Estrada denied that his series of meetings with his political allies was part of a plan to destabilize the Arroyo administration.

In a telephone interview at the Parkview luxury hotel, Estrada squelched speculation that his meeting with Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, former Executive Secretary and San. Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora was designed to map out plans for a supposed coup.

"We just had preliminary talks on how to unite the opposition," he said.

Hotel guards prevented some reporters from entering the 18-tower hotel complex. One guard said it was not necessarily because Estrada was there.

Estrada said Lacson did not make any commitments during the meeting late on Thursday night and he did make any demand.

Brainstorming sessions

"I told him it is time for us to set aside petty bickering and personal animosity for the interest of the country. That should be our objective," Estrada said.

Asked about Lacson's reaction, Estrada took a deep breath and said: "*Tatango-tango lang* (He just nodded his head)."

At around 10:30 yesterday morning, the INQUIRER saw former Labor Secretary Benny Laguesma entering Estrada's flat.

Laguesma said that Estrada had a "brainstorming" with his former Cabinet men when they had dinner with him at the hotel last Jan. 9.

He said Estrada wanted to continue or see good results out of the projects he started during his short stay in the Palace.

Asked whether they discussed about the unification of the opposition, Laguesma said Estrada only asked him about labor and economic concerns.

Queried how Estrada could implement his programs since he was under police detention, Laguesma replied: "There is no concrete action plan on that, We are still brainstorming on how do we really help if we see our country suffering from poverty."

He said what they intended to do was to "wage a revolution in the hearts and minds" to get the country back to economic progress.

Angara scoffs at Lacson

In Manila, opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara scoffed at Lacson's trip to Hong Kong to see Estrada, saying: "It's just propaganda. He's trying to ride on Estrada's initiative."

Angara, in a phone interview, said Lacson was "insignificant" to the unity talks to be held among opposition groups.

"As far as I'm concerned, he's not important to the opposition," Angara said, adding that it was Lacson who was "the main cause for Fernando Poe Jr. losing in the election." *With a report from Christine Avendaño*

Inquirer . . .

From page A1

for Estrada's man to let him in.

'A friendly paper'

Estrada said he could not believe that the INQUIRER would devote banner headlines for two days about his barber, whom he had flown in from the Philippines to give him a trim.

"Why did you not report that I footed the bill for the plane, accommodation and meal expense of my police escorts, and when I sent for my barber, you reported about it," he said.

Estrada said he feared what this reporter—along with ABS-CBN reporter Melo del Prado—would write if they were allowed into his apartment.

He said it was enough that he had a "friendly paper"—published by Ninez Cacho-Olivares—with him, and GMA reporter Maki Pulido and her video crew, when the INQUIRER called.

'Dangerous to be right'

"You are off-limits here," he said, again laughing.

Later yesterday, Estrada told GMA News that it was hotel security that barred both the INQUIRER and ABS-CBN.

Estrada, who once initiated an advertising boycott of the INQUIRER when he was President, said he believed his suffering from an unfair media would eventually have its end.

"Be not afraid. We will surpass all these, even the controlled media. The evil will have its day and time, but the good will always have its day and that day is coming," he said.

He added: "As French philosopher Voltaire said, 'It's dangerous to be right when you know the government is wrong.'"

Bayan proposes collective leadership

By Norman Bordadora

THE BAGONG Alyansang Makabayan, which backed then Vice President Macapagal Arroyo during the 2001 popular revolt that ousted Joseph Estrada, said it would call for a "democratic coalition government" if any effort to unseat Ms Arroyo succeeded.

"A democratic coalition government is a more desirable alternative to (the President) rather than the old formula of constitutional succession that only empowers the traditional politicians and the elite," Bayan secretary general Renato Reyes said.

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PULSE ASIA SURVEY

A third of Pinoys want GMA out

By Fe Zamora

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He said even the military does not command trust from the public, noting that when the respondents were asked about martial law as an alternative, a high 65 percent "disagreed" while only 21 percent agreed and 13 percent was undecided.

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No moral authority

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From page A1

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"He is concerned about his safety. *Baka daw siya mabaril.* (He might be shot.) I hope it will not happen. *Hindi tayo nakakasiguro. Hindi ko naman sinasabing sa government.* (We can't be sure. I'm not saying the government will do it.) It's possible there's a third force out to kill him," Dilangalen said.

'Overkill'

Dilangalen also described as an "overkill" the government's decision to put some thousands of policemen on heightened alert as part of the government's security preparations for Estrada's return.

"I will be there personally," Aglipay said. "If he would be assassinated, I would be assassinated with him."

"What else do you want?" Aglipay asked in a press conference yesterday.

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Still, the PNP downplayed reports that some forces might try to seize power to coincide with Estrada's return.

Worst-case scenario

Nevertheless, a destabilization plot is part of a worst-case scenario the PNP is preparing for, Razon said.

But Pimentel said, "There's no serious effort to mass people."

Pimentel said that the government apparently believed that Estrada's supporters were mounting destabilization moves.

What GMA knows

"It's borne out by the fact that Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo knows she did not win the elections," Pimentel added.

He said the grand homecoming for Estrada as prepared by his supporters were apparently meant to "boost his peace efforts:"

Toned down welcome

But it will be a "toned down" welcome party for Estrada.

"President Estrada ordered us to tone down our activity to belie allegations that this will be used to destabilize the administration. So we will do as he says," Ronald Lumbao, president of the pro-Estrada People's Movement Against Poverty (PMAP), told the INQUIRER.

Estrada confirmed to the INQUIRER that he had told his supporters to forego any welcome activity on his return.

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Lumbao said the PMAP members would still greet their leader but would limit themselves to the airport road to show support and give him "some form of encouragement, and of course, to show our happiness for a successful operation."

Erap vows to unify GMA foes

From page A1

cudero (NPC, Sorsogon) told the INQUIRER when asked if such gatherings might be construed as part of swirling talk about alleged destabilization plots against the Arroyo administration.

Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez previously claimed that certain people in the opposition had planned an uprising against the government which would have coincided with last month's funeral for Poe.

Citing intelligence reports, Gonzalez said that though the plan might fizzle out for lack of popular support, another attempt might be pulled off by either February—when the country marks the anniversary of the 1986 Edsa Revolt—or in May to mark the anniversary of the May 1, 2001 failed uprising by Estrada supporters.

Presenting platform

Opposition leaders present during the Makati assembly included Makati Mayor Jejomar Binay and former Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan.

While the next national and local elections are still two years away, Escudero said that "we just wanted to present our platform."

Asked if they were promoting the same platform offered by Poe in the May 10 presidential elections, Escudero said: "Gringo made some modifications to it but it's basically the same."

Honasan, a former Army colonel who figured in bloody coup attempts against the Aquino administration in the 1980s, was the architect of a reform agenda which supposedly inspired the failed Magdalo military putsch in Makati in 2003.

People's concerns

"No, we just want to hear the people's concerns at the grass roots," Escudero said, when pressed whether or not the conduct of such assemblies were advance preparations for the 2007 polls.

Escudero said the Makati assembly last Thursday showed what were the major concerns of the ordinary man on the street.

"High electricity rates. The prospect of more and higher taxes. Even the lack of electoral reforms as no computerization has been implemented especially in the last elections," Escudero said.

He stressed that the opposition had long planned to hold such grass-roots assemblies.

"The plan is to have two assemblies each week. Initially, these will be in Metro Manila. But we'll be going out later," Escudero said.

Meeting with Ping, Zamora

In Hong Kong, Estrada denied that his series of meetings with his political allies was part of a plan to destabilize the Arroyo administration.

In a telephone interview at the Parkview luxury hotel, Estrada squelched speculation that his meeting with Sen. Panfilo "Ping" Lacson, former Executive Secretary and San. Juan Rep. Ronaldo Zamora was designed to map out plans for a supposed coup.

"We just had preliminary talks on how to unite the opposition," he said.

Hotel guards prevented some reporters from entering the 18-tower hotel complex. One guard said it was not necessarily because Estrada was there.

Estrada said Lacson did not make any commitments during the meeting late on Thursday night and he did make any demand.

Brainstorming sessions

"I told him it is time for us to set aside petty bickering and personal animosity for the interest of the country. That should be our objective," Estrada said.

Asked about Lacson's reaction, Estrada took a deep breath and said: "*Tatango-tango lang* (He just nodded his head)."

At around 10:30 yesterday morning, the INQUIRER saw former Labor Secretary Benny Laguesma entering Estrada's flat.

Laguesma said that Estrada had a "brainstorming" with his former Cabinet men when they had dinner with him at the hotel last Jan. 9.

He said Estrada wanted to continue or see good results out of the projects he started during his short stay in the Palace.

Asked whether they discussed about the unification of the opposition, Laguesma said Estrada only asked him about labor and economic concerns.

Queried how Estrada could implement his programs since he was under police detention, Laguesma replied: "There is no concrete action plan on that, We are still brainstorming on how do we really help if we see our country suffering from poverty."

He said what they intended to do was to "wage a revolution in the hearts and minds" to get the country back to economic progress.

Angara scoffs at Lacson

In Manila, opposition leader Sen. Edgardo Angara scoffed at Lacson's trip to Hong Kong to see Estrada, saying: "It's just propaganda. He's trying to ride on Estrada's initiative."

Angara, in a phone interview, said Lacson was "insignificant" to the unity talks to be held among opposition groups.

"As far as I'm concerned, he's not important to the opposition," Angara said, adding that it was Lacson who was "the main cause for Fernando Poe Jr. losing in the election." ***With a report from Christine Avendaño***

Inquirer . . .

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for Estrada's man to let him in.

'A friendly paper'

Estrada said he could not believe that the INQUIRER would devote banner headlines for two days about his barber, whom he had flown in from the Philippines to give him a trim.

"Why did you not report that I footed the bill for the plane, accommodation and meal expense of my police escorts, and when I sent for my barber, you reported about it," he said.

Estrada said he feared what this reporter—along with ABS-CBN reporter Melo del Prado—would write if they were allowed into his apartment.

He said it was enough that he had a "friendly paper"—published by Ninez Cacho-Olivares—with him, and GMA reporter Maki Pulido and her video crew, when the INQUIRER called.

'Dangerous to be right'

"You are off-limits here," he said, again laughing.

Later yesterday, Estrada told GMA News that it was hotel security that barred both the INQUIRER and ABS-CBN.

Estrada, who once initiated an advertising boycott of the INQUIRER when he was President, said he believed his suffering from an unfair media would eventually have its end.

"Be not afraid. We will surpass all these, even the controlled media. The evil will have its day and time, but the good will always have its day and that day is coming," he said.

He added: "As French philosopher Voltaire said, 'It's dangerous to be right when you know the government is wrong.'"

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Bayan proposes collective leadership

By Norman Bordadora

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BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Estrada defends GMA on impeachment raps

From page A1

power, President Macapagal-Arroyo, against Salonga's insinuations that she might have violated the law—and was, thus, impeachable—for allowing the ousted leader to seek medical treatment in Hong Kong.

"What is the involvement of Ms Arroyo in this?" Estrada, speaking in Filipino, said in an interview aired over dzXL.

Estrada said the order allowing him to go abroad was issued by the judiciary, which he said was "independent" from the other branches of government.

"President Arroyo had nothing to do with this. It was the call of the Sandiganbayan," said Estrada. "That is very clear."

Estrada castigated Salonga for supposedly forgetting the law.

"I don't understand this Sen. Jovito Salonga. In his old age, he has lost his heart for us," Estrada said.

"Sa madaling salita e, itong matandang ito, hindi ko sinasabing ulyanin na. Baka lang. Eh alam mo mambabatas yan. Baka malilimutin lang (In other words, this old man, I am not saying he has become senile, but only maybe. You know he is a legislator, but maybe he has become forgetful)."

Estrada reminded the former senator that he (Salonga) himself was allowed to go abroad to seek treatment in the United States for his heart ailment while he was under detention for alleged rebellion during Ferdinand Marcos' rule by martial law.

Estrada also recalled that despite being convicted by a military tribunal, then Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino was also allowed by Marcos to go to the United States for medical reasons.

Other defenders

Ms Arroyo's allies in Congress also came to her defense.

Surigao del Sur Rep. Prospero Pichay said he was disappointed that a legal luminary like Salonga would claim that Ms Arroyo could be impeached over Estrada's trip to Hong Kong while being tried before the Sandiganbayan for plunder.

"Former Senator Salonga is losing his legal luster on this issue. For how can he claim the administration is forging an agreement with Estrada when the prosecutors, who represent the administration, have vehemently opposed the numerous motions filed by Estrada," Pichay said.

"This only proves that all these alleged compromise talks are baseless."

House Majority leader Prospero Nograles said Ms Arroyo did nothing impeachable and that Salonga's arguments were bereft of any legal or constitutional basis.

Nograles said Ms Arroyo only followed a legal court order in allowing Estrada to go abroad.

Ibon warning dismissed

"Legal court orders must be followed by the executive. That's the oath of office she took as president ... If she won't follow or implement the court order, then that's impeachable," Nograles said.

Other Arroyo allies dismissed warnings from the think tank Ibon Foundation Inc. that she might face more destabilization attempts.

Leyte Rep. Eduardo Veloso said he was confident that Ms Arroyo would finish her term and complete her economic agenda.

Veloso said those behind the attempts to destabilize her government merely wanted to undermine the accomplishments of her administration.

"But with her firm resolve and strong leadership, the President will fulfill her legacy to the people," he said.

Nueva Ecija Rep. Aurelio Umali said the Arroyo administration had proven itself to be resilient in confronting past challenges to topple it.

Dirty side of politics

"Whether her critics would admit it or not, the President has earned the respect and support which would help her surmount the dirty side of politics we are new experiencing," Umali said.

He noted that "doomsayers and naysayers" had also predicted Ms Arroyo's downfall during her first term in office but this did not come true.

Sailing over rough waters

Malacañang was unperturbed by warnings that the Arroyo administration would be under constant threat of destabilization.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye dismissed the warnings as having "no basis in objective political conditions."

"The national leadership stands on moral high ground," Bunye said in a statement.

Ibon Foundation had said its surveys showed a steady decline in Ms Arroyo's public approval rating and that she would face more destabilization attempts this year due to the opposition becoming active again.

Ms Arroyo has laughed off the scenarios painted by Ibon and confidently declared she would finish her six-year term.

Bunye said the reform in the graft-ridden military was going on and other institutions of government were "working as one to uphold the public interest."

"We have sailed over rough waters before and we have prevailed," Bunye said.

Advice to skeptics

"Our advice to doomsayers and skeptics: Hop on the boat to stability and progress or be left to languish in obsolescence," Bunye added. *With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana, Jeffrey M. Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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To Pasig >
EDSA
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The Fort
C-5
< To Bicutan
Manila American Cemetery
To Gate 3
McKinley Road
Ayala Ave.
Ayala Center
Ayala Station
< To Pasay
MARKET! MARKET! Bonifacio Global City
Plus! a chance to win one of the 12 CHEVROLET
5th Draw: Jan. 15
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Coming: Shirts that recharge cell phones

From page A1

Team leader Ted Sargent, a professor of electrical and computer engineering at the university, said the cell harnesses infrared light from the sun and can form a flexible film on the surface of cloth, paper or other materials.

Portable electricity

And the film can turn 30 percent of the sun's power into usable electrical energy—a far better performance than the 6 percent gleaned from the best plastic solar cells now in use.

"The fact that these materials harness the sun's energy using flexible materials potentially could allow you to weave the plastics into fibers, sort of the way we have synthetic fibers already, and to weave those into clothing and make something that's a wearable solar cell," Sargent said from Boston, where he is working until the summer.

"That's sort of portable electricity."

Sargent said the coating could be woven into a shirt or sweater and used to charge an item like a cell phone.

Better than batteries

"We expect that our cell phones or our e-mail can go anywhere with us, but we don't have that expectation of a continuous supply of power. The best that we have is batteries, which run out," he said.

"So if we could have a wireless source of power like how the sun would provide, this would be pretty exciting."

Research about the new cell was published in the Sunday online edition of the scientific journal Nature Materials, and Sargent said he was now looking for investors who could turn the invention into a commercially viable product.

Terry White, president of the Solar Energy Society of Canada, said solar cells on these lines could transform the industry.

"If they make (solar cells) both less expensive and the potential applications more varied, then it's a major breakthrough," he said.

Sargent said the technology could be avail[illegible] consumer within five to 10 years. But it already has Wall Street venture capitalists interested.

"The technology really caught my eye both in the scientific literature and the business prospects," said Josh Wolfe, managing partner at Lux Capital in Manhattan, a venture capital firm that makes an estimated $1- to $2-million US investment per project in early stage nanotechnology.

What if there's no sun?

"So the concept of having rollable newspaper displays or other things [illegible] power your laptop or portable devices or [illegible] products that are best left to the creativity or the engineers, to me, it represents a pretty sea-change."

So what happens if the sun doesn't shine?

"There is obviously no power in the visible (light)," said Sargent. "But in the infrared, it's not completely zero power.

It doesn't have to be as hot as the sun, but everything that's warm, gives off some heat. *Reuters*

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New jail for Antipolo inmates

By Luige A. del Puerto

SIX HUNDRED inmates of the Antipolo City jail will move to a new home before the month ends.

"We put up the new building for humanitarian reasons," Mayor Angelito Gatlabayan told the INQUIRER. "We cannot just allow the inmates to die of diseases that could easily spread because of congestion inside the facility."

He added: "The inmates are also entitled to live decent lives. Some of them, in fact, have yet to be proven guilty."

The present city jail was built to accommodate only 100 prisoners.

City officials will inaugurate the new three-story building, located in Barangay San Jose, on Jan. 28. The next day, the city's inmates can start moving in, Gatlabayan said.

The building, which can accommodate up to 3,000 prisoners, will also serve as the new headquarters of the Philippine National Police. The police's main office would be on the third floor, while the first and second floors have been reserved for the inmates.

Gatlabayan said the new building would have a sun deck or sunning area, a bigger mess hall, a kitchen, quarters for jail guards and three-deck beds for inmates.

The mayor said male and female inmates would have separate quarters. There would also be separate cells for minors and hardened criminals.

"It will also hold a clinic and a room for sick patients," he added.

The building's original design had been changed upon the recommendation of jail officials.

"We had to redesign it, according to the jail official's specifications. We spent a little more for that," Gatlabayan said.

The project was supposed to be undertaken by the Interior Department but the national government could not fund it.

The building cost P18 million, according to the mayor.

In 2004, at least seven inmates died in the city jail because of tuberculosis, a preventable but highly contagious disease.

Jail officials had said that, given the conditions in the facility, it was only a matter of time before a patient's condition worsened.

"If you have TB, and with the kind of situation that we have, your condition would rapidly deteriorate," jail warden Supt. Ignacio Panti told the INQUIRER earlier.

Most of the country's jails are congested.

In Metro Manila jails, inmates have to sleep in "shifts" because there is only enough room to stand up.

At least one woman prisoner in another city has died because of poor ventilation. The summer heat had triggered an asthma attack which proved fatal for the victim.

₱30M asked for couple's release

By Nancy C. Carvajal

NEGOTIATIONS are ongoing between the families and the kidnappers of a German national and her Filipino boyfriend who were abducted Tuesday evening from a coffee shop in Muntinlupa City.

"The kidnappers asked for a P30-million ransom," said National Capital Region Police chief Avelino Razon Jr.

The victims were an employee of the coffee shop and his German girlfriend, a resident of an exclusive subdivision in Alabang.

"We have proof of life," Razon told the INQUIRER, but refused to go into details.

He added that the police is in control of the situation and is coordinating rescue efforts with the victims' families.

Muntinlupa police said that according to some witnesses, the victims were on their way to their vehicle when the suspects suddenly showed up and dragged the pair to a blue Hyundai van, and then headed toward the South Luzon Expressway.

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'Spaceships' beam up power on Manila square

FLYING saucers in Manila? No, only two towers at the Bonifacio Shrine with powerful lights designed to light up the square. ERIK ARAZAS

By Tarra V. Quismundo

LIKE spaceships poised to take off, Manila's newest landmarks overlooking one of the city's busiest spots stand out in the urban landscape.

Two tower lights stand on the grounds of the Andres Bonifacio Shrine, a square across the Manila City Hall currently in the last stages of rehabilitation that began in July last year.

The "spaceships" flank the Bonifacio mural between Padre Burgos and Antonio Villegas Streets, a short walk away from City Hall and a popular mall.

Reminiscent of the renowned Space Needle in Seattle, Washington, the 40-foot twin light towers are scaled-down models of their 605-foot North American counterpart, equipped with what could be the most powerful beams in the city, if not the entire country.

"This is the first of its kind in the country," said Manila Mayor Lito Atienza.

The tower lights are called metal halides. Around each of the disks almost 10 feet in diameter, eight bulbs emit one kilowatt (kW) of electricity, illuminating at its brightest an area of at least 65 feet.

"But the light is still visible beyond that, gradually fading as you go farther [away]," said Manila city electrician Ernesto Cuyugan.

And why not, since each of the towers were designed to match the power of 200 fluorescent lamps.

Nearly out of this world, too, are the imported bulbs with solar sensors that automatically light up by sundown. At sunrise, the bulbs turn off.

"Even if it's 12 noon, on a dark, rainy or cloudy day, the bulbs would turn themselves on," explained Cuyugan.

The tower lights can withstand wind speeds of up to 180 kilometers per hour (kph), and are even sturdier than electric posts erected to resist 160- to 165-kph winds.

The city's latest attraction is the centerpiece of what now looks like a lights display in the park ringed with 29 lampposts called zell lights. These lampposts have automatic lights that emit 720 watts of electricity, in colors of red, blue, yellow and white. Their sheer power dwarfs that of typical fluorescent lamps, which have 40-W power.

Trees in the park were also illuminated with 60 green uplights.

To light up the waiting shed on the park's edge on Padre Faura Street, three sets of swing lights were put up. Similar to drop lights, each photo-controlled swing light was strung with three light bulbs with a power of 400 W.

In all, the square at one time consumed more than 53 kW of electricity, equivalent to the lighting power of more than 1,300 fluorescent lamps.

"The mayor gave us an additional budget for this, because he said that when it came to lighting projects we should not be stingy," said Cuyugan.

Last year, the city paid P100 million for its electricity bills, said Cuyugan, including power dues for all streets, parks and other public places lit by the city. This year, Manila would need P120 million, he added.

Atienza's spokesperson Armand Sebastian said lighting up the city's public places was also a deterrent against illegal activities which were less likely to happen in well-lit areas.

Erap's childishness didn't endear him to subordinates

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

THE COMMENT made by former President Erap in reaction to the burning of an OB van of ABS-CBN seemed to encourage more terrorist acts of the same nature.

Erap said the burning of the van should serve as a warning to other media groups "engaged in biased reporting."

That unsavory comment is very surprising as it came from a father whose daughter Jackie married into the Lopez clan that owns ABS-CBN.

Erap would hit even his relatives by affinity, the Lopezes, just to promote his own agenda.

When Erap was still in power, ABS-CBN was biased in covering him because of the extended family relations.

The ABS-CBN network news organization tried its best to overlook Erap's faults, even telling reporters to go easy on him because his daughter was married to one of the Lopezes.

Now that he perceives ABS-CBN as biased against his friend, the late Fernando Poe Jr., during the last presidential election, Erap rubbed salt on the wound by making the comment that left a bad taste in the mouth.

ABS-CBN, the country's largest network, tried to be fair in its coverage of FPJ on the campaign trail. It had to take on the air of fairness and objectivity, otherwise it would be accused of being biased in favor of Erap's bosom buddy.

Why is Erap now pummeling ABS-CBN? Because he will do everything to be in the limelight. Remember, he's a former actor and show biz personalities are wont to make controversial statements or acts to gain publicity mileage.

* * *

Erap's easy ways and irresponsible acts and statements endeared him to the "masa" that found his antics cute.

But do you think his Cabinet secretaries liked his antics? They didn't. They only pretended to go along with him because they wanted their jobs.

Some of his former Cabinet members visited him several days ago at his Hong Kong hospital room as a gesture of gratitude for having been selected to serve in his administration.

The truth is, some of them don't have any respect for their former boss. Even when he was in power, many of his Cabinet secretaries considered him a clown.

It was from one of his Cabinet secretaries that I got a quotable quote reportedly made by Erap to one of his advisers: "*Bakit, Presidente ka ba? Magpresidente ka muna bago ka magbigay ng ganyang* advice (Why, are you the President? Become the President first before you give me that kind of advice)."

It was also from a member of his "kitchen" Cabinet that I heard a comment supposedly made by Erap about the then First Lady, Loi Estrada, in front of her and his friends: "*Mahirap pala dito sa malaking bahay. Hindi ka puwedeng lumabas. Nakakulong ka lang dito at wala kang makita kundi ang pagmumukha ng Misis mo* (Now I realize how difficult it is to live in a big house [referring to Malacañang—RT]. You can't easily roam around. You get cooped up in this place and see nothing except your wife's face)." His friends were embarrassed by Erap's statement because they saw Loi forcing herself to smile.

DPWH sets weekend for Edsa road repair

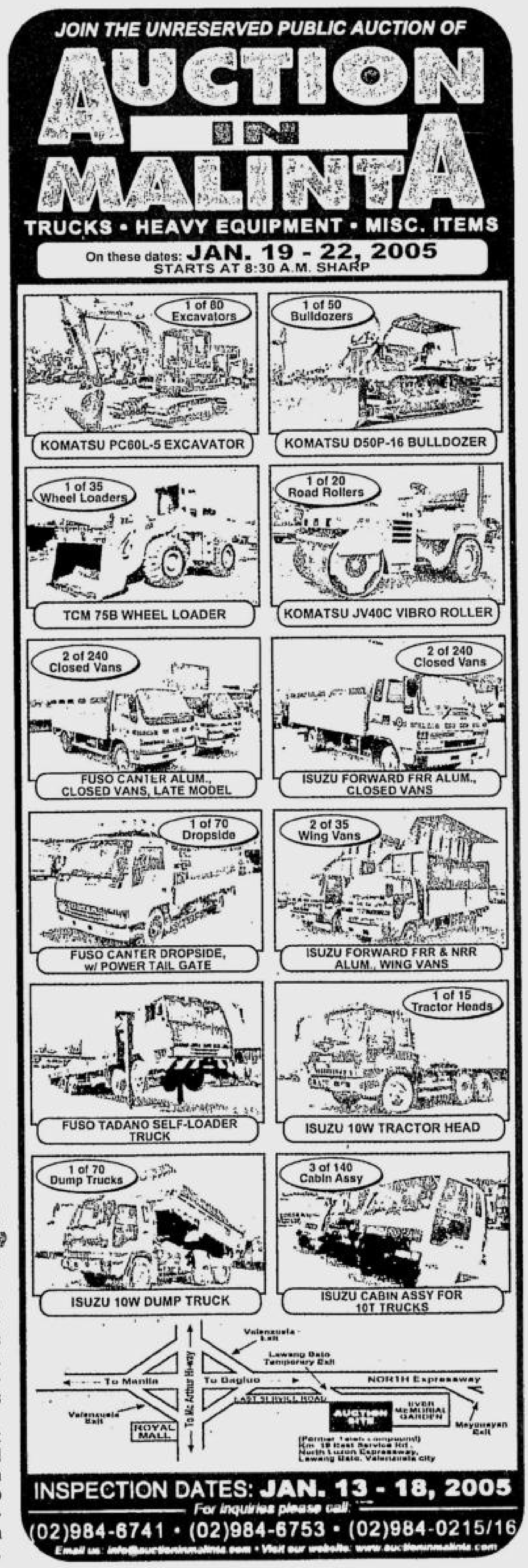
By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE DEPARTMENT of Public Works and Highways has agreed to conduct road repairs on Edsa during the weekend to ease up the heavy flow of traffic on the main thoroughfare, according to the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Executive Director Angelito Vergel de Dios yesterday said the DPWH project had caused unusually heavy traffic on Edsa since it began earlier this week.

"With the new arrangement, there would be lighter traffic during the week," Vergel de Dios said, adding that parts of Edsa would undergo concrete reblocking from 10 p.m. on Fridays until 5 a.m. on Mondays.

Motorists were warned about heavy traffic on Saturdays and Sundays because of repairs on Edsa from Guadalupe, Makati, to Kamuning, Quezon City. Alternate routes would be shown on boards along major intersections.



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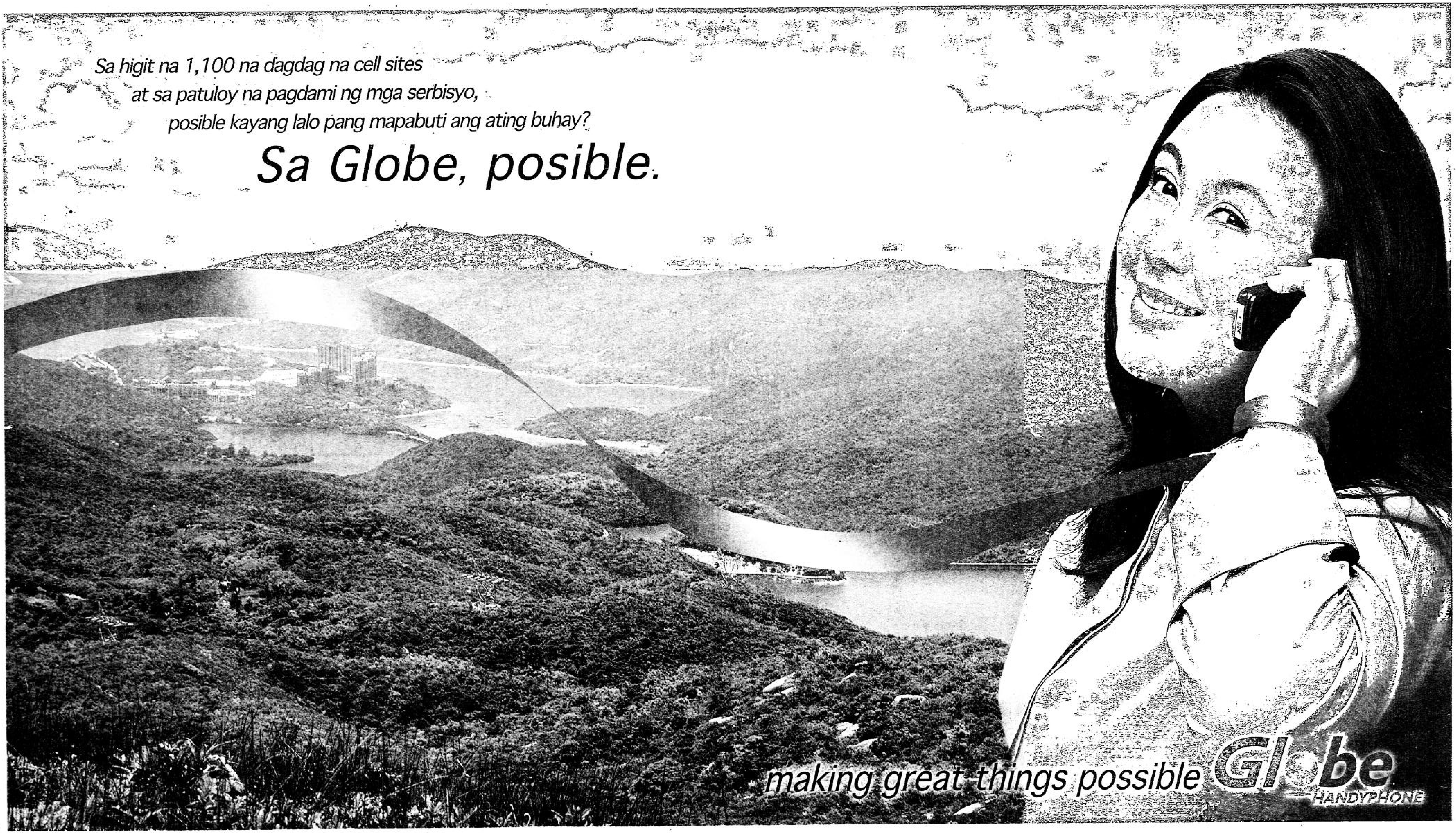

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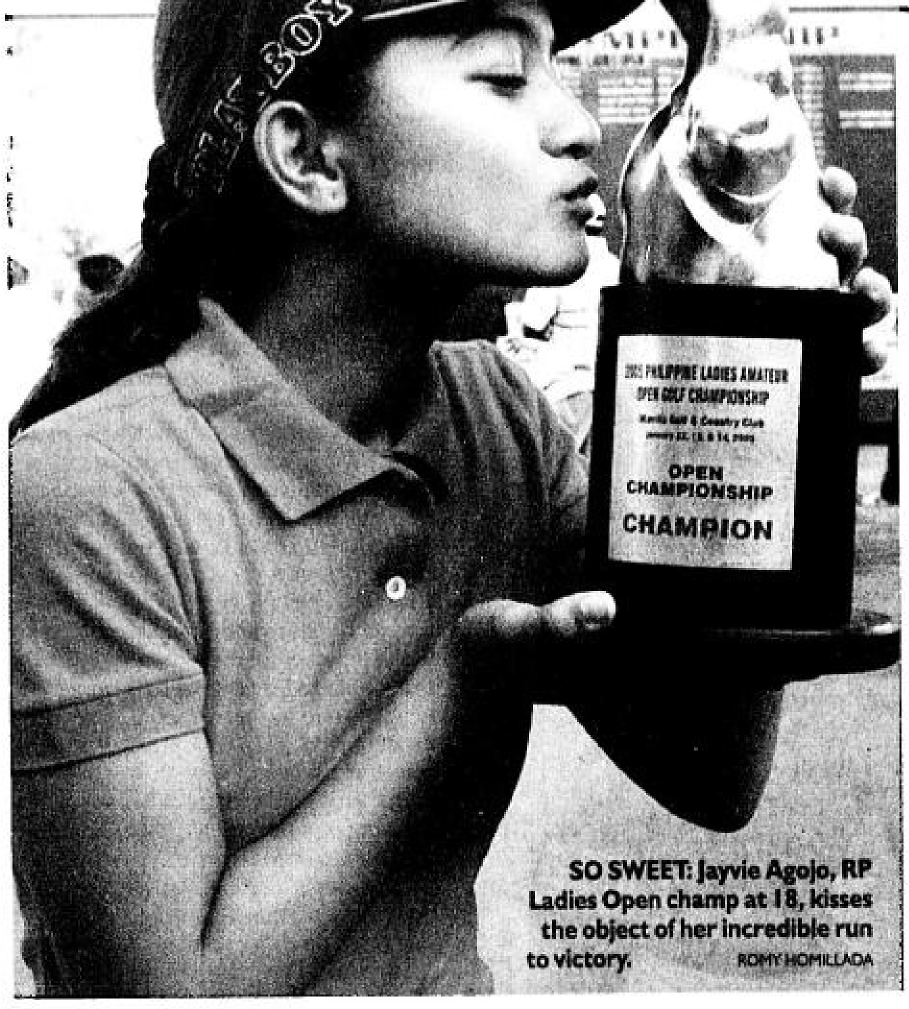
2005 PHILIPPINE LADIES AMATEUR OPEN GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP
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SO SWEET: Jayvie Agojo, RP Ladies Open champ at 18, kisses the object of her incredible run to victory. ROMY HOMILLADA

RP LADIES

Gritty Jayvie nails it after shoot-out

By Musong R. Castillo

FLASHING a magical short game, Jayvie Agojo shot a two-under-par 69 despite hitting only four greens on the back nine yesterday to win the Smart Gold Philippine Ladies Amateur Open at the Manila Golf Club.

The 18-year-old Agojo nailed a birdie on the 17th to cap a bogey-free final round and beat Korean Ji Yeon-woo by one stroke and defending champion Frances Bondad by three after a classic shoot-out.

The three had been tied for the lead starting on the 10th hole before Agojo canned a six-footer on the 440-yard par-4 17th after a 190-yard 5-wood second shot.

"I'm so happy, this being my first big win," said Agojo, who will take up a college scholarship at Pepperdine in the US this August.

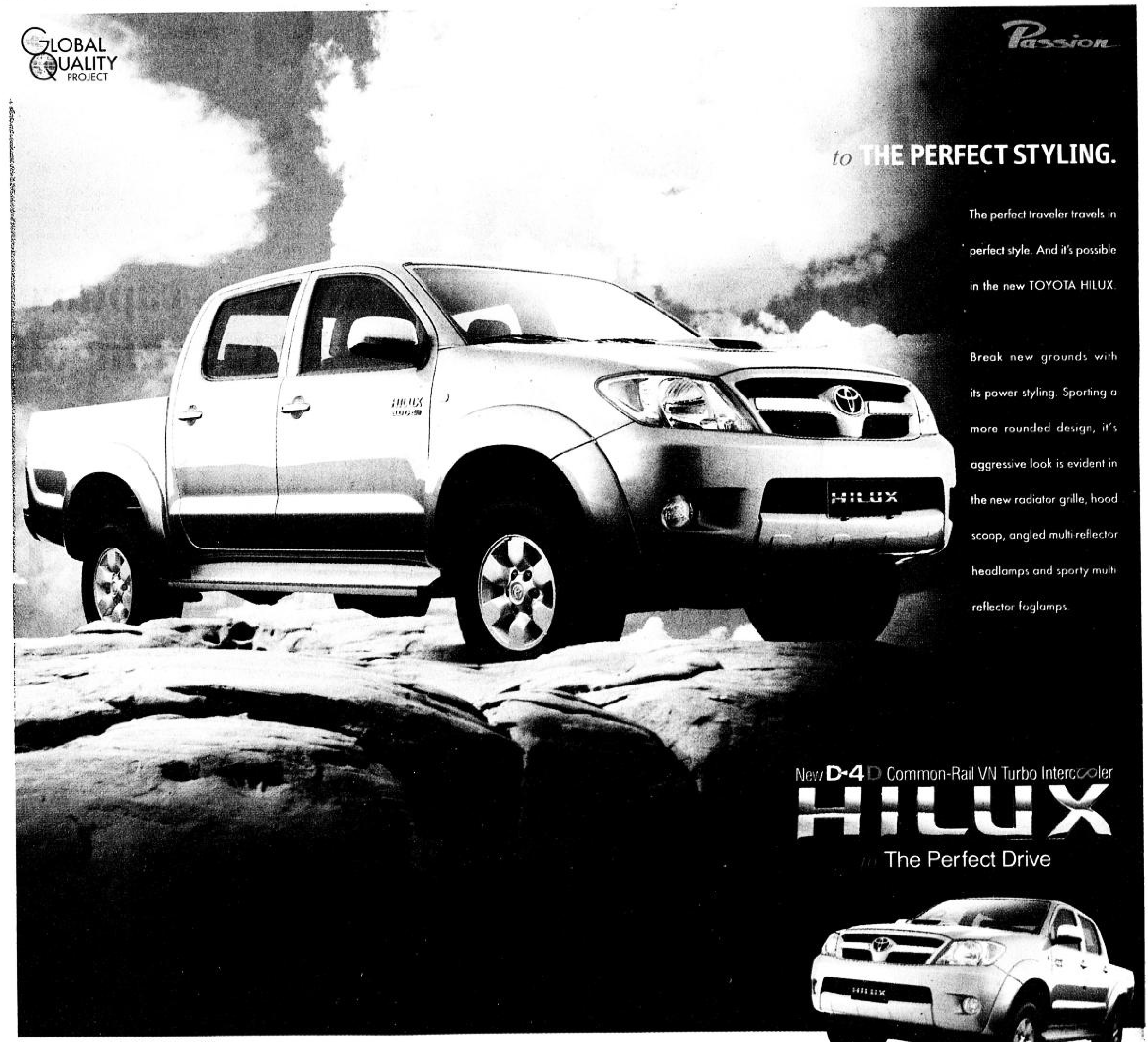
"I was so nervous up until my third shot on 18th," added the winner of the DHL Open last year, who shot a 68 in the final round of the world amateur team championship last October and boosted the Philippines to a tie for 18th place.

The Korean Ji finished with a 70 while Bondad, who started double bogey-eagle-bogey-bogey, carded a 72 for third.

Agojo needed only eight holes to overhaul a two-stroke overnight deficit to Carmelette Villaroman before coming up with the shot of the tournament on the 17th fairway that had the huge gallery roaring.

Villaroman limped out of the champi-

GRITTY/ A26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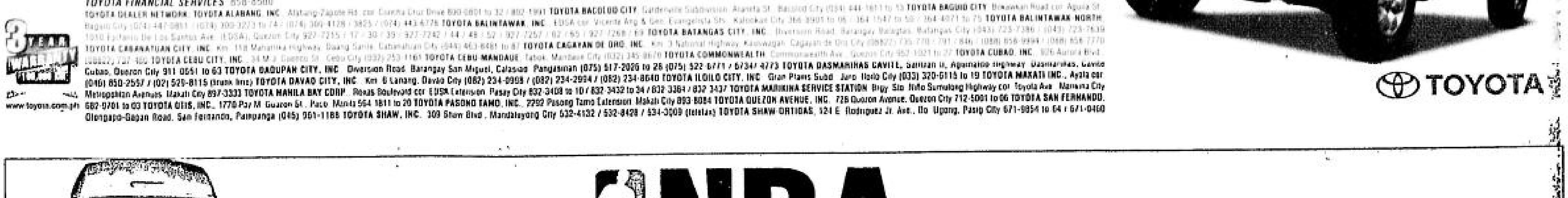
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Pacquiao to sell 'war' in Mexico

Big payday for Filipino ring hero

By Recah Trinidad

LOS ANGELES, California—Promoters predicted a sell-out and billed the March 19 boxing event a "war," but Manny Pacquiao leaves for Mexico on Tuesday to help sell his fight against Erik Morales in the country of his opponent.

Pacquiao said he's been extremely excited at the big bout, described here as a scorching showdown.

Pacquiao said he was as excited about Morales as when he fought Marco Antonio Barrera in November 2003.

Respect earned

The odds against Morales, which have tilted in Pacquiao's favor, show the respect the Filipino boxing hero has earned since his sensational conquest of Barrera.

Pacquiao yesterday confirmed that he has been initially pegged a strong favorite among bookmakers in Las Vegas where the fight will be held.

He was a 3-1 underdog against Barrera whom he stopped in the 11th round in their San Antonio, Texas showdown.

Pacquiao said he would prefer that the odds become even in the run-up to the fight.

He said the surge of sentiment in his favor must've been a result of his sensational conquest of Barrera, who last November dethroned Morales as world super featherweight king.

"*Sana maging* even *lang ang* odds," he said. "*Pero bale wala na 'yan, hindi naman ako pumupusta*."

Pacquiao was surprised when told that he was scheduled to leave for Mexico with his trainer Freddie Roach and promoter Murad Muhammad to help sell the March 19 showdown.

Least worried

The trip should take him out of the gym for at least a couple of days but Pacquiao appeared the least worried.

In fact, he told the INQUIRER he has to slow down a bit in his training in order to avoid a burnout.

He begins sparring next week but Pacquiao, a tireless and hard worker, said he would start with four-round on-ring workouts.

He did the usual morning jog followed up by gym routines in the afternoon yesterday.

Then tinkering with a guitar and belting out a few songs, he clarified that, other than the $1.75 million (about P98 million) purse against Morales, he would be entitled to a percentage in the pay-per-view earnings.

Much stronger

He said he expects to face Morales in the same form he had when he fought Juan Manuel Marquez to a controversial 12-round draw, also at the MGM Grand in Las Vegas last May.

Roach, however, said Pacquiao is sure to come in much stronger against Morales.

The Pacquiao-Morales showdown will be at 130 pounds, a totally new territory for the Filipino ring sensation who once held the IBF bantamweight (122 lb) title.

Pacquiao, 5-foot-6, will come in a couple of inches shorter than Morales, who could be fighting for the last time as a super featherweight before moving up to the lightweight division.

Just like in his clash with Barrera when he had to move up to 126 pounds, Pacquiao has to again jump overnight to a heavier division.

But Pacquiao and Roach were one in assuring that the sudden shift should not be a cause for worry.

"Morales is a little taller but we know how to cut off that advantage," Roach said.

He added Pacquiao cannot be expected to go up all the way to 130 pounds as this would make him bloated.

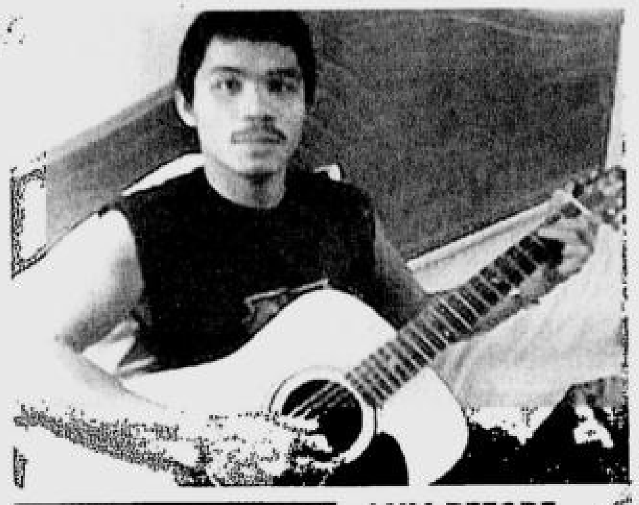
Perfect foe

Roach assured Pacquiao packs the bigger punch, adding Morales should be a perfect foe because the Mexican legend loves to mix it up.

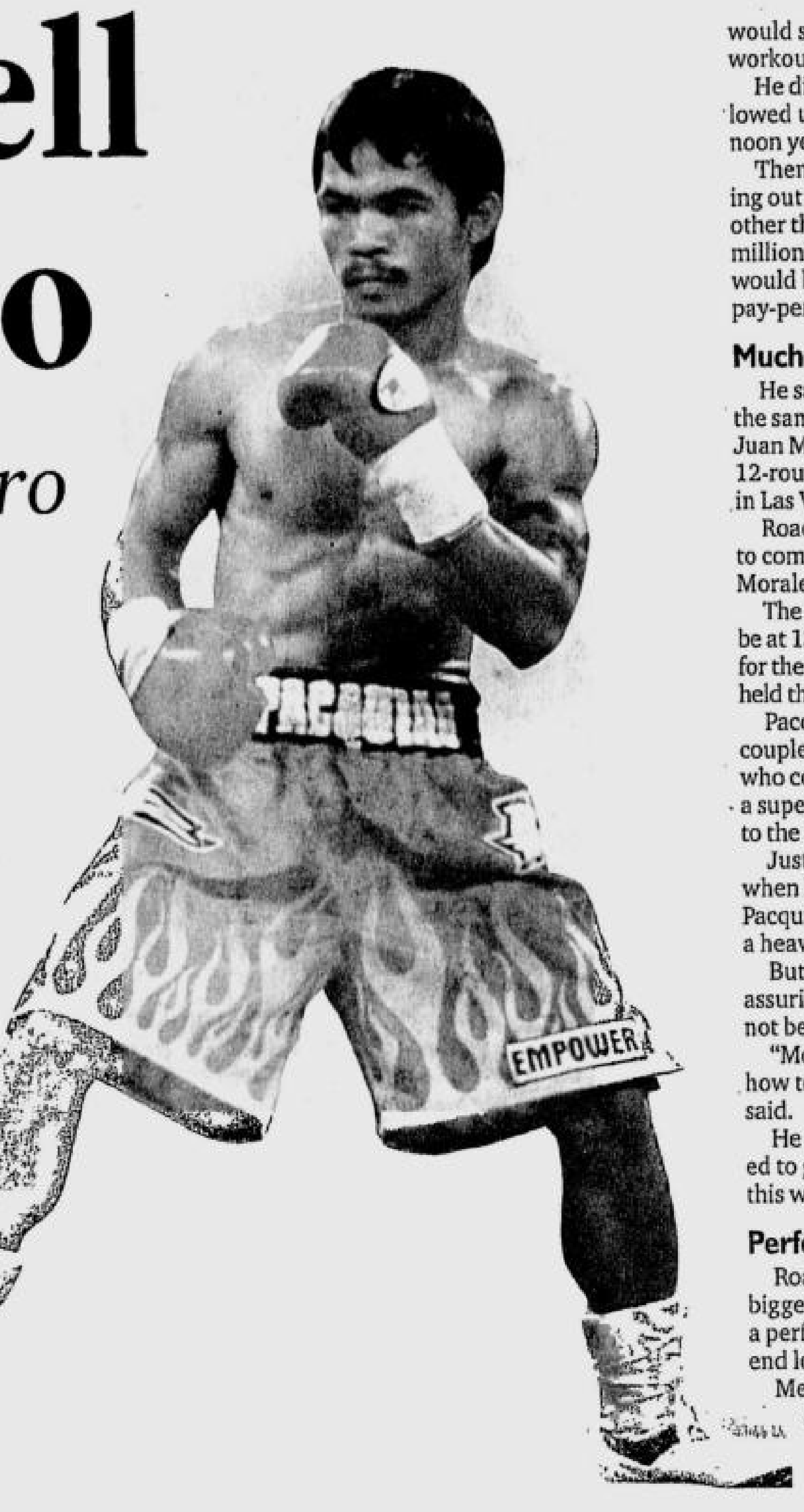
Meanwhile, Morales has been quoted as saying that Pacquiao has made a mistake in thinking he has the stronger punch.

"I hit harder," Morales said. "This will be a war."

Said Bob Arum of Top Rank: "Fight fans are going to see an all-action fight from bell-to-bell. This is an exciting event and this is what professional boxing is all about."



LULL BEFORE THE STORM Manny Pacquiao (above) sings tunes and plays the guitar in his room at the Vagabond Inn in Los Angeles a day after organizers set his fight with Mexico's Erik Morales (left).
RECAH TRINIDAD; AP



Gritty Jayvie nails it after shoot-out

From page A25

onship fight with three bogeys in her last five holes before the turn and wound up with a 79 for 224.

Agojo actually hit only 10 greens in a 35-34 round that proved to be the best in the tournament. Her other birdie came on the par-5 7th.

She rescued par from the trap on No. 10, almost holed a chip from a downhill lie on 11, pitched to within gimme distance on the 13th before showing great touch by landing a lob shot to within inches on the par-5 15th. Agojo also saved par from the edge of the green on the par-3 14th.

Bondad, the Fil-Australian hoping to represent the Philippines in the Southeast Asian Games this year, had several chances to move ahead, but blew them all.

The 16-year-old from Sydney had a shot similar to Agojo's on the 17th but pushed her approach so far to the right.

Ji still had a chance to tie Agojo with a birdie on the par-5 18th. But the 14-year-old deposited her third shot into a greenside bunker from a stymied second shot.

Suteera Chanachai of Thailand assembled a 77 for 226 and a tie for fifth with tiny Aileen Rose Yao (76). Nontaya Srisawang turned in a 74 and wound up seventh with a 228 total.

Crystal Faith Superal fired an 81 and settled for a share of ninth spot with Singapore's Melissa Loh, who shot a 73, with 232 totals.

Meanwhile, Geleen Handog of Alabang also staged a rally of her own in Class A, assembling a 77 and a 239 total for a seven-stroke victory over Ma. Isabel Piccio.

Vinice Godio stumbled with an 87 to finish third with 246.

Final scores:

216—J. Agojo; 217—Ji WJ; 219—F. Bondad; 224—C. Villaroman; 226—S. Chanachai, A. Yao; 228—N. Srisawang; 231—A. Tanpinco; 232—C. Superal, M. Loh; 233—L. de Guzman; 234—D. De Villa, G. Mak, L. Roberto; 240—Woo YK; 241—Hong SA; 242—T. Locsin; 244—R. De Guzman.

Top five Class A scores:

239—G. Handog; 246—M. Piccio, V. Godio; 251—C. Dayrit; 252—D. Mak; 257—T. Dabao

Top five Class B scores:

255—B. Mendoza; 258—S. Bruce; 268—M. Legaspi; 285—L. Sy; 286—G. Medestomas

JAYVIE Agojo is hugged by Frances Bondad after holing out. ROMY HOMILLADA

Koreans capture 3 RP Int'l jungolf crowns in style

SOUTH Korea dominated the eighth Samsung Philippine International Junior Golf Championship with three titles at the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club's East course.

Cho Min-gyu carded a final round 75 to run away with the boys' Class A crown with 221, then joined forces with Lee Seung-hoon to capture the team title with 460.

Kim Ha-neul gave South Korea its third title in the tournament sponsored by Samsung Electronics Phils. when she came up with a 73 to rule the girls' 13-17 class with 228.

Wolen Juan Superal and John Kier Abdon topped their respective divisions to give host Philippines two titles, while Singapore, Hong Kong and Thailand won one each.

Superal, 12-year-old son of Filipino touring pro Wendy, closed out with a 77 to run away with the boys' Class C crown with 229 while Abdon matched par 72 to rule the boys' Class B with 223.

The Philippines could have equaled South Korea's feat but Jenz Tecson lost to Thailand's Chavit Buraparat on the first hole of their sudden death playoff for the boys' Special Division crown.

Singapore's Shearn Chua Yuhao shot the tournament's best round of 69 to score a come-from-behind victory in Class D with a three-day total of 217.

Hong Kong's Tiffany Chan Tszching fired a last-day 78 and weathered the challenges of Nicole Clara Serapio and Katya Margarita de la Cruz of the Philippines to top the girls' 12 and under class with 228.

Serapio and De la Cruz matched Chan's 78 to settle for second and third, with 235 and 237, respectively.

Buraparat and Tecson toured the world-famous East course with 78s for 233 to force a sudden death showdown for the special division crown. Buraparat parred the first extra hole—against Tecson's double bogey—to win.

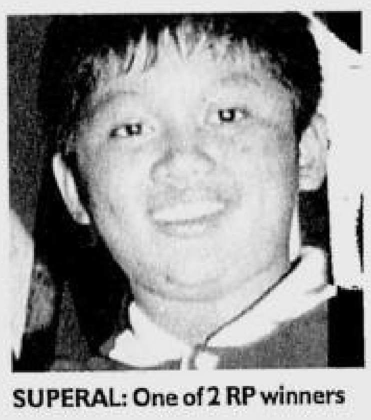
First-round leader Oliver Gan of the Philippines came up with a last-day 80 to settle for third place in the special division. Indonesia's Rinaldi Adiyandono was fourth with an 85 and 242.

South Korea's Yu Jun-hyung scored an 80 to place second behind Abdon with 235. Third was Cebu City's Edsel Lance Tan after he came up with a 79 for 242.

Vadtapat Suwannaspasri made an 83 to settle for second behind Superal in Class C with 250. Manila's Marcel Puyat shot an 89 and Steven Lam Fsz-fung of Hong Kong made an 86 to share third place at 262.

Malaysia's Johani Ainil Bakar closed out with a 76 to capture second place in the girls' 13-17 division with 236. The Philippines' Lovelynn Guioguio struggled with an 82 to settle for third with 238.

Organizer Edgardo "Boy" Cantada, who launched the event in 1998, thanked the parents, team officials and the sponsors for supporting the three-day event.



SUPERAL: One of 2 RP winners

STANDINGS	W	L
Montaña	10	3
Magnolia	10	3
Gr. Goose	9	5
Welcoat	7	6
AMP	6	8
ICTSI	5	8
Toyota Otis	5	9
Air Phils.	2	12

GAMES TODAY
(*Pasig Sports Center*)
2 p.m.—Welcoat vs ICTSI-La Salle
4 p.m.—Magnolia-FEU vs Montaña

Archers seek last q'final berth

IT'S ICTSI-La Salle's turn to duplicate what its archrival had done exactly two days ago in the PBL Open Championship.

The Archers try to join the AMP-Ateneo Eagles in the quarterfinals when they collide with the Welcoat Paintmasters at 2 p.m. today at the Pasig Sports Center.

A loss would eliminate the Archers and elevate the Toyota Otis-Letran Knights to the next round on the strength of their earlier two wins over La Salle.

It was the same Knights the Eagles downed Thursday to cap their impressive comeback from deep down the standings to clinch the third quarterfinal slot.

Meanwhile, early semifinalists Magnolia-FEU and Montaña Pawnshop decide at 4 p.m. who ends up as the top team after the eliminations.

"I hope our streak won't end against Montaña," said coach Koy Banal of the Wizards, who are shooting for a second-round sweep.

Another triumph will also extend the defending champions' winning run to nine games, the longest in the league in recent years.

La Salle is in for a tough time against the Paintmasters, who had overwhelmed the Archers right from the tipoff of their first-round encounter for a smooth 69-51 victory.

Jasmine W. Payo

NSAs giving PSC unprecedented show of support

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IN A show of unity, most of the 55 national sports associations yesterday agreed to give the Philippine Sports Commission more time to settle its financial obligations to the NSAs.

The unprecedented move was announced by PSC officer-in-charge Butch Ramirez after his consultative meeting with the NSAs over lunch where he presented the agency's financial status.

Ramirez said he was surprised by the cooperation showed by the same NSAs which had assailed the PSC in the past over the delay in their financial assistance. The NSAs even staged protest actions and signature campaigns to dramatize their grievances.

Sources said the PSC payables could run up to about P100 million.

"We will not run away from our obligations, but all we ask is a grace period to find viable solutions to this concern," said Ramirez. "We are calling for a moratorium of maybe three to six months on our payables to the NSAs."

Ramirez was accompanied by commissioners Leon Montemayor, Ambrosio de Luna and Michael Barredo during the meeting where the PSC promised to prioritize the reimbursement to the NSAs of the travel expenses they incurred in overseas stints.

Ramirez added he would inspect PSC facilities in Baguio City next week in the company of Philippine Olympic Committee president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco.

He said there are about 100 athletes in Baguio City's Teachers' Camp, which is being eyed as the main training center for the now 600-strong national athletes gearing up for the Southeast Asian Games this November. The idea is to decongest the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex, which houses some 500 athletes.

Strong RP bid for 2007 ABC tilt

By Al S. Mendoza

HONG KONG—The Philippines is virtually assured of hosting again the ABC Championship, Asia's premiere basketball event that was last staged in Manila when all the 32 PBA players in the national pool of candidates weren't born yet.

This was the confident feeling of Dr. Carl Ching Men Ky, the president of Fiba (World Basketball Federation), when Go Teng Kok met up with him on Thursday here to present the Philippine bid to host the ABC caging in 2007.

Also with Go in the exclusive audience with Dr. Ching were BAP secretary general Graham Lim and BAP legal counsel Bonnie Alentajan, with several members of prestigious local newspapers here joining the press conference at a plush restaurant.

Go was recently appointed project director of the Basketball Association of the Philippines (BAP). He holds the unenviable task of gunning up BAP projects geared towards international exposure for the RP five, including stints in Qatar this year and Saitama City in Japan next year in tandem with PBA commissioner Noli Eala.

Basketball unity

Go, also the president of the Philippine Track and Field Association and National Chess Federation of the Philippines, will link up shortly with Eala to discuss massive plans to further cement the recently signed Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the BAP and PBA.

"The MOA between your PBA and BAP is the biggest single move towards the restoration of the Philippines as the real basketball power in Asia," said Dr. Ching. "With basketball unity now at hand in your country, it is my personal opinion that you are in the strongest position to win the bid for the hosting of the ABC in 2007."

CHING: Strong bid

GO: Big plans

Dr. Ching cited two more reasons why the Philippines should beat South Korea in the bidding war for the ABC hosting in 2007.

"First, the Philippines remains No. 1 in the world in terms of basketball popularity," he said. "Many Asian countries also love very much the hospitality of the Filipino people."

Said Dr. Ching, who holds a Ph. D. in economics: "Second and equally important, the Philippines first hosted the ABC in 1961. It deserves another opportunity to host it again."

32 years ago

The last time the country hosted the ABC, now called Fiba Asia Cup, was 32 years ago in 1973. The Philippines, then coached by the late Tito Eduque, beat South Korea for the title. Among those in the team then were Robert Jaworski, Jimmy Mariano, William "Bogs" Adornado, Francis Arnaiz, Dave Regullano, Manny Paner, Rosalio "Yoyong" Martirez and Rogelio "Tembong" Melencio and Lawrence Mumar, both deceased.

At 31, both Dennis Espino and Nic Belasco are the oldest in coach Chot Reyes' current list of 32 PBA hopefuls for the national team that targets the gargantuan job of making it to the 2008 Beijing Olympics—the 2007 ABC being the qualifying event for Asia's bets in the Olympiad.

But although Dr. Ching admitted he would love to see the Philippines host the ABC in 2007, he qualified that his feeling is a "personal opinion as I love all the 212 member-nations of the Fiba and I don't want to be accused of playing favorites."

44 countries

The Philippines hopes to draw many of the 44 Asian and Middle East countries to join the ABC event in Manila in 2007.

"With hard work on your part, I don't see any reason why you shouldn't be hosting the ABC in 2007," said Dr. Ching, whose ascendancy to the top of Fiba in 2002 came after having been ABC president for 28 years.

In his parting shot to Go, Dr. Ching said: "Please extend my regards to the Filipino people, the basketball fans there but especially to Danding Cojuangco, a great basketball supporter."

SPORTSWATCH

RTU, Polytechnic bets share honors

RIZAL Technological University and the Polytechnic University of the Philippines each won championships in two events at the conclusion of the State Colleges and University Athletics Association (Scuaa) recently. The RTU Technocrats won the team chess title and men's softball crown, while the PUP Marooners won the men's baseball and women's softball events. Eulogio "Amang Rodriguez Institute of Science and Technology, meanwhile, conquered RTU in the sepak takraw finals with 25 total points. PUP's victory over the Lady Technocrats in the women's softball title series was extra sweet, having dealt the Lady Marooners their first loss in the event in 17 years, 8-6, in the first game last Tuesday. The Technocrats won both the men's and ladies' titles in chess for the overall crown, with their teams amassing 15 points each.

Lipa hosts swim competition

LIPA CITY—The Mediatrix Swimming Association of Lipa in coordination with the city government headed by Mayor Vilma Santos and Rep. Ralph Recto will hold a one-day swimming competition at the newly inaugurated Olympic size swimming pool at Community Park at Grandja, Lipa City. Billed as the 1st San Sebastian Cup, it is also a part of the celebration of the City Fiesta and a tryout for the RP swimming team to the Southeast Asian Games the country will host this December. Eighteen teams headed by host Lipa City Mediatrix Swimming Association are entered. A dozen teams from Southern Luzon, three from Metro Manila and one each from La Union and Naga City will vie for honor in the tournament which will start at 7 a.m. A dozen teams from Southern Luzon, three from Metro Manila and one each from La Union and naga City will vie for honor in the tournament which will start at exactly 7 a.m. According to mayor Santos, the meet is just the start of the city's sports development program in line with president Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo's instruction to give priority to sports. Santos said that also in line are tournaments in Little League Baseball, badminton, karatedo, volleyball and cycling for this year. She said that later on, she will expand her program which will include other sports in accordance with the recommendation of her Sports director.

Sea Dragons tilt draws 1,000

OVER 1,000 swimmers are expected to see action in the 2nd XSC Sea Dragons Invitational Sprint Meet today at the Olivarez College Swimming Pool in Paranaque City. The meet hopes to encourage the growth of the next crop of tank stars in the country. Competition will begin at 8 a.m. and is expected to last until 1 p.m. "We hope to foster the spirit of competition among our young athletes and we hope they go on to better and greater things," said Paul Anthony Yap, president of the XSC Sea Dragons and a former national swimmer. Sponsored by Oishi (Liwayway Marketing Corporation), Arena Philippines and Philippine Savings Bank, the tournament is aimed at swimmers aged 6 to 25. The Xavier Sea Dragons is a foundation set up by former Xavier School Swim Club members. The XSC Sea Dragons hosted their first invitational swim meet in April last year at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex (RMSC) where some 400 swimmers participated. This year's edition of the meet is expected to draw more than twice as many.

Pamigay Premyo derby stakes P1M

MORE than 60 cockers and breeders belong to the second group of participants competing in today's P1-million Pamigay Premyo 5-Cock Derby at the air-conditioned Las Piñas Coliseum. The event will be sponsored by Sagupaan Complexor 3000. Action starts at 6 p.m. Interested parties may call 873-1040, 874-3910 or 0920-5609404 (look for Gerry or Julius). The LPC management has put up a guaranteed prize of P1 million. Entry fee is P2,200 for the elims. An additional fee of P6,600 is required during the championship on Jan. 29. Qualified for the finals are Federico Agco (Big Boy), Pepe Burgos (March 30 LPC 3-Cock), Art Perez (RZB 2M 5-Cock Surigao), Dante Gonzales (SH Ansarap), Richard Tingzon (Richard), Emil Chua (Concrete Breaker), engineer Wang Yu (Hindi Akin), Jover Dilao (Jhezil Farm I and II), Johnny Elorde (Elorde Jan. 11), Hummer and Stephen B entries.

Fastest Kill derby tomorrow

THE CROWD-DRAWING Fastest Kill Challenge One-Cock Ulutan, with a guaranteed prize of P100,000 is set tomorrow at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit with Sagupaan Complexor 3000, Sagupaan Mite Free and Sagupaan B-50 Forten as sponsors. With more than 150 cockers and backyard breeders expected to field their prized gamebirds, the event will start at 8 a.m. Registration starts at 7 a.m. This event, which will be held every Sunday has an entry fee of P500 and minimum bet of P1,100. A prize of P25,000 is up for grabs every Monday and Tuesday, but entry fee is only P100. During Wednesdays, the guaranteed prize is P50,000 with a P300 entry fee. The PCC management has decided to make the event as it's regular four-day format. For inquiries, contact 843-1890, 843-1746 and 816-6750.

Shell slips past weary Purefoods

GAMES TOMORROW (*Araneta Coliseum*)
(Game 2 of best-of-three quarterfinals)
4:10 p.m.—Alaska vs San Miguel Beer
6:30 p.m.—Purefoods vs Shell

By June Navarro

RARELY does a battle-weary team overcome a well-rested opponent.

Coming from a two-day rest, Shell proved this to be true although it had to settle for a 71-69 decision of a fagged-out Purefoods side, 71-69, last night in Game 1 of the Gran-Matador PBA Philippine Cup quarterfinal series at the Araneta Coliseum.

"We knew they (TJ Hotdogs) will succumb to fatigue that's why we were eager to beat them and finish the game at once. But we were wrong. Purefoods was able to sustain its energy through coach Ryan's (Gregorio) rotation," said Shell coach Leo Austria.

Kalani Ferreria completed a three-point play off a steal that pushed the Turbochargers to a 72-67 lead with barely a minute left and the TJ Hotdogs finally collapsed, misfiring their last five attempts from the field.

"Our running game didn't work. Luckily, we came out with more energy along with the breaks in the endgame," said Austria after the Turbochargers finally downed the TJ Hotdogs for the first time in three meetings in the conference.

"Twenty-four hours of rest could be enough for Purefoods to recover. We would still make adjustments and check our flaws," added Austria.

Billy Mamaril banged in 14 points while Tony Dela Cruz had 13 for the Turbochargers, who are looking to enter the semifinals for the first time since the 2001 Governors Cup where they finished fourth.

Rookie James Yap paced the TJ Hotdogs, who were coming off back-to-back games against the Coca-Cola Tigers on Wednesday and Thursday.

The Turbochargers go for the clincher in Game 2 tomorrow and arrange a best-of-five semifinal showdown against the Talk N Text Phone Pals.

In another development, the first five of the Barangay Ginebra Kings barged into the top 10 players contesting the player of conference award.

Eric Menk topped the list with 1,454 statistical points, closely followed by teammate Mark Caguioa (1,443 Sps). Playmaker Jayjay Helterbrand landed fourth (1,398), Rommel Adducul seventh (1,268) and Rodney Santos 10th (1,212) after the 18-game preliminary phase of the elimination round.

Meanwhile, Miller, Alapag, Yancy De Ocampo and Mark Telan requested that their physical fitness test with the RP training team be rescheduled for next week at the Moro Lorenzo Sports Center.

RUDY ESPERAS

SHELL'S Kalani Fereria (right) dribbles past Purefoods' Kerby Raymundo.

The scores:

SHELL 71—Mamaril 14, Dela Cruz 13, Cruz 9, Ferreria 7, Alvarez 7, Calaguio 7, Jackson 7, Yap 7, Sta. Maria 0, Bajar 0.

PUREFOODS 69—Yap 16, Llmpot 14, Raymundo 10, Artadi 7, Laure 5, Evangelista 4, Yee 4, Castillo 4, Hrabak 2, Demapo 2, Simon 1, Espinosa 0.

Quarters: 16-11, 37-31, 56-55, 71-69.

Asi lawyer welcomes DOJ appeal

TAULAVA

THE LAWYER of suspended Talk 'N Text cager Asi Taulava yesterday welcomed the decision of the Department of Justice to appeal the decision of Manila Regional Trial Court Judge Romulo Lopez granting a permanent injunction against a DOJ move to strip Taulava of his Filipino citizenship.

Eduardo Francisco, Taulava's counsel, expressed confidence that the higher courts would uphold the decision barring the DOJ and the Bureau of Immigration from conducting deportation proceedings against Taulava.

In his decision, Judge Lopez ruled that the DOJ cannot reopen a case which it had already decided when it issued an identification certificate recognizing Taulava as a Filipino citizen. In effect, Lopez said only the courts can determine the issue of citizenship after a trial where the parties have been given the proper opportunity to present evidence.

At the same time, Taulava's lawyer said the decision of Philippine Basketball Association commissioner Noli Eala to review the suspension of the league's Most Valuable Player in 2003, was "a most welcome gesture."

Francisco was reacting to reports that Eala would study the implications of the permanent injunction issued by the Manila court. While Taulava's suspension stays, Eala said he does not want to preempt any formal decision that may be taken by the league regarding the issue.

Francisco took issue with Justice Secretary Raul Gonzalez's statement that "you cannot be a Filipino simply because of a court injunction."

He explained that Taulava was a Filipino by birth and recognized as such in an identification certificate signed by then BI commissioner Andrea Domingo and affirmed by Justice Secretary Hernando B. Perez.

AIM strikes again

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

UNKNOWN to many, Enrico Villanueva has just inked a new contract with Red Bull Barako. It is a contract that can be the envy of all. A model, I'd say.

For one, the contract says the 6-foot-5 Villanueva will earn close to P19 million in 4-1/2 years. That's almost P5 million a year for the Barako with the show-me-your-teeth smile.

For another, the power-playing Villanueva is only 24 years old. From today up to 2009, he can live like a king. And by the time the contract expires, he'll only be 29. More opportunities are ahead of him, more roses strewn on his way if he continues to handle things well.

Indeed, some guys have all the luck.

Yes, *Pareng* Ed, we are really in the wrong business.

If Enrico's luck holds, he can collar another juicy contract in 2009 that can last another five years. And what we'll probably see—sans bad luck befalling him before that—is a deal that, from 2009 to 2014, will make Enrico virtually a Barako for life.

Is he following the footsteps of Alvin Patrimonio?

Many years back, Patrimonio signed a P25-million contract with Purefoods, triggering the birth of the PBA Millionaires Club that would soon count Jerry Codiñera and Jojo Lastimosa as among its proud members. That was nearly two decades ago. Last year, Patrimonio retired—as a Purefoods Hotdog. He's been a Hotdog all his life, highlighting his revered career by becoming one of only two with four MVP awards—the other being Ramon Fernandez.

Villanueva's new contract has also virtually given him a permanent home. To Enrico from here on, Red Bull it will be. Forever.

Take a bow, George Chua.

Take a bow, Bryan Chua.

Take a bow, Tony Chua.

I have yet to meet you guys, shake hands with you, but with what I've gathered from the grapevine thus far, you are saints insofar as Red Bull employees are concerned. And that includes a lady staff of yours named Rowena Sanchez, who fondly refers to you as "the bosses" I should talk to on matters affecting Red Bull's relations with the public as well as the company's clients.

Did I get that right, Bryan?

If the answer is yes, you might hear from me soon.

Take a bow, too, Atty. Manny Mendoza, Andy Jao and Yeng Guiao. You all make Red Bull a worthy drink. Which should also make Villanueva worthy of the bounty showered on him—and still-to-be showered bounty on him.

Hardly had the ink dried on Villanueva's new contract, and here he is trying to seal a new deal for a house-and-lot loan to the tune of P4 million—if he hasn't clinched it yet.

Indeed, some guys have all the luck.

And to think the loan is, reportedly, interest-free. At a mortgage of P100T a month, that's a steal as Villanueva pockets nearly P350T monthly. In roughly three years and four months, he will have fully paid his P4-million loan.

Indeed, some guys have all the luck.

At barely 29 years of age in 2010, barring unforeseen circumstances, Enrico could own his house and lot.

But here's the catch: The agents of Enrico Villanueva, known by their acronym AIM (Ateneo's Invisible Men), earn not a single centavo while representing the former Ateneo Eagle in negotiating with Red Bull. By any yardstick, that takes the cake.

Who can top that?

Indeed, some guys have all the luck.

Shakey's V-League games hit primetime

DUE TO insistent public demand and the need to further popularize women's volleyball, organizers of the Shakey's V-League said it will have its games telecast on primetime beginning with La Salle-UST second round encounter tonight (Saturday) at 7 p.m. on IBC-13.

STANDINGS	W	L
UST	7	1
La Salle	7	1
PSC	5	3
Lyceum	4	4
Letran	3	4
FEU	1	7
SSC	1	8

GAME TODAY
(Telecast on IBC-13)
8 p.m.—UST vs DLSU
GAMES TOMORROW
(Rizal Coliseum)
1 p.m.—Letran vs FEU
3 p.m.—UST vs PSC

The match was actually played last Sunday and aired last Monday afternoon, but due to numerous requests, the battle of the so-called "titans" will be shown again tonight, thus giving volleyball fans and enthusiasts the chance to watch the contest between the two premier women's volleyball squads in the country.

"Since there has been a persistent clamor both on IBC-13 and at the V-League offices, we have decided to move the telecast of the games from the afternoon slot to primetime," said Emilio "Jun" Bernardino, president of the organizing Sports Vision Management Group Inc.

BERNARDINO

"And by airing the UST-La Salle match this weekend, we hope to offer the fans a top-notch volleyball action."

Under the new TV format, the first game of each playdate will be aired starting at 8 p.m. with the second match to be shown the following day, also beginning at 8 p.m.

However, there will be no telecast on Wednesday with the second game of the Tuesday playdate to be aired on Saturday beginning at 7 p.m.

The change in TV schedule couldn't have come at a better time with the tournament, sponsored by Shakey's Pizza, now on its crucial phase of the eliminations.

La Salle and UST are tied with 7-1 (win-loss) cards apiece with guest team Philippine Sports Commission in third with a 5-3 mark.

With the top three teams fancied to clinch the first three semifinals berths in the tournament co-presented by Dunkin Donuts, HBC Home of Beauty of Exclusives, Smart and PLDT with Mikasa and Accel as official volleyball and outfitter, respectively, the fourth and final slot remains a tossup between Lyceum (4-4) and Letran (3-4).

The Lady Knights try to catch up with the Lady Pirates when they take on the Far Eastern U netters tomorrow at 1 p.m. at the Rizal Coliseum with the UST and PSC clashing in the other match at 3 p.m.

The match pitting Letran against Far Eastern will be shown at 8 p.m. with the UST-PSC contest to be telecast on Monday, also starting at 8 p.m.

UAAP football: Ateneo opens title defense

FOOTBALL takes centerstage tomorrow in Season 67 of the UAAP with Ateneo opening its title defense against arch rival De La Salle at the Blue Eagle pitch in Katipunan.

The Ateneo-De La Salle match is the first-game in a scheduled five-game bill, with the simple opening ceremonies set at 9 a.m.

The other men's football matches pit UP against UE at 1 p.m. and FEU against UST at 3 p.m. In women's action, it will be UST against UP at 1 and FEU against Ateneo at 3. Defending women's champion De La Salle drew a bye.

Women's softball resumes today at the UST pitch with matches between UE and De La Salle at 9 a.m., Adamson and UP at 11 a.m. and UST and Ateneo at 1 p.m.

Also on tap today are the lawn tennis matches at the Rizal Racket Club in Pasig City and juniors volleyball at the UE gym today and tomorrow.

In men's baseball at the Rizal Memorial Stadium tomorrow, it will be UP against NU at 8 a.m. followed by the matches between Adamson against De La Salle and UST against Ateneo.

PSA AWARDS NIGHT

Among stars, Jenny shines brightest

Photos by Ernie U. Sarmiento

IT WAS the night of sports' biggest stars. Even Manny Pacquiao, who couldn't make it because he is in the US training for a megabuck fight, managed to beam a little message to extend his thanks for being named the Philippine Sportswriters' Association Sportsman of the Year for yet another time.

In the absence of the revered boxing sensation, it was the lithe golf heroine, Jennifer Rosales, who shone the brightest.

Rosales took home her trophy, the Sportswoman of the Year award, for a breakthrough season in the LPGA, that included her first career win.

THE LEGENDARY Lydia de Vega-Mercado is inducted to the Hall-of-Fame. De Vega-Mercado, in her prime, was the undeniable queen of the tracks.

The complete list of awardees:

SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR—Jennifer Rosales (golf)

SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR—Manny Pacquiao (boxing)

SPECIAL AWARDS—Alex Pagulayan (billiards); Jasmine Figueroa (archery); Antoinette Rivero (taekwondo)

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD—Alvin Patrimonio (basketball)

MAJOR AWARDS—Mark Paragua (chess); Nelson Mariano III (chess); Liza del Rosario (bowling) Django Bustamante (billiards); Efren Bata Reyes (billiards); Rhyan Tanguilig (cycling); Gabriel Espinas (amateur basketball); Angelo Que (golf); Patti Dilema (horseracing)

TONY SIDDAYAO AWARD—Wesley So (chess)

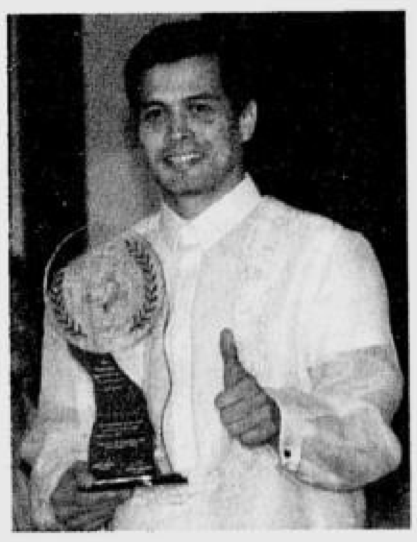
LEADERSHIP AWARD—Celso Dayrit

HALL OF FAME—Mona Sulaiman (athletics); Lydia de Vega (athletics); Caloy Loyzaga (basketball); Lauro Mumar (basketball)

POSTHUMOUS—Boy Arazas (basketball); Agustin Callao (swimming); Fely Fajardo (basketball); Purita Negal Jacinto (softball); Faustino Ardina (baseball); Boy Mendez (PSA); Ernie Singson (PSA); Teddy Alfarero (basketball); Rudy Samson (golf); Freddie Deen (darts); Domingo Itchon (basketball)

CITATIONS—Randy Sulco (boxing); Gaby dela Merced (karting); Chot Reyes (basketball); Matteo Guidicelli (karting); Don Bosco (sports program); Michelle Bumgarner (karting); Glenn Aguilar (motocross); AR Ramos (golf); Anjou Jellicoe Mauricio (X-Games); Yolanda Mendigoria (powerlifting); Juvic Pagunsan (golf); Enrique Rafael Rosales (powerlifting); BEST Center; Henry Dagmil (athletics); Tagaytay City; Marichi Gandionco (swimming); Kenneth San Andres (motorcross) Miguel Tabuena (golf); JR Gonzales (golf); Totoy Tingzon (basball); Hermie Esguerra (horseracing); Ato Badolato (basketball); Jayvie Agojo (golf); Dottie Ardina (golf); Rene Catalan (wushu); Roy Vence (athletics); RP archery team; Arvin Ting (wushu); Tyson Sy (AF3); Solar Sports; Rudy Salud (boxing).

MOST PRODUCTIVE NSAs—Taekwondo, badminton.


FLASHING a smile and the thumb's up sign, Alvin Patrimonio shows off his trophy. The long-time Purefoods cornerstone was handed the PSA President's Award after announcing late last year that he was retiring from basketball after a colorful career highlighted by four MVP awards.

PROVIDING the glamour during the awards night were stylish major awardees Jayvie Agojo (golf) and Michelle Bumgarner (karting).

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FORMER First Lady Amelita "Ming" Ramos receives in behalf of the badminton association she heads an award for being one of the most productive national sports associations.

Clark hosts RP motocross second round

THE BATTLES among the country's motocross riders resume next weekend when the National Motorcycle Sports and Safety Association (Namssa) stages round 2 of the 2005 Philippine National Motocross Series at the Namssa-Clark Eagle Raceway in the Clark Special Economic Zone (CSEZ) in Angeles City, Pampanga, on Jan. 22-23.

Namssa is affiliated with the Philippine Sports Commission (PSC) and the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC) and is the only local organization recognized by the Federation International de Motocyclisme (FIM), the governing body for motorcycle sports worldwide. Namssa's mandate is to promote motorcycle sports in the Philippines using FIM's universally accepted rules and regulations and safety standards. Namssa was also behind the huge success of the Puerto Princesa City FIM Asian Motocross Championships last year which garnered a citation from the Asian Motorcycle Union for being the best-organized event of the 2004 FIM Asian Motocross Series.

The race next weekend will be the inaugural event on the newly constructed motocross racetrack that combines high-speed stretches, tight turns, uphill and downhill sections. The technical course intended to bring out the best from all the riders is not lacking in the safety aspect. On Jan. 22, Namssa will also formally open the Namssa School of Champions with a riding clinic by 2004 Rider of the Year Glenn Aguilar. The opening-day clinic will be free of charge.

AGUILAR

Milo BEST women's volleyball kicks off tomorrow

THE 9TH Milo BEST Women's Volleyball League (WVL) unfolds at 8 a.m. tomorrow at the Ateneo Grade School covered courts with 37 teams in the fold.

A member of the PSC Legends who played for the Philippine team when it won the Southeast Asian Games gold in 1993 will grace the opening ceremony, tournament commissioner Florentino Santos said.

"She'll be our surprise guest," said Santos, a former national coach.

The entries are:

Elementary (competitive)—Colegio San Agustin, La Salle Lipa, Miriam College, PWU-JASMS and San Beda-Alabang.

Elementary (developmental)—Assumption College, Baesa Adventist Elementary, Dominical School, Miriam College, New Era University, Poveda Learning Center, Southville International School and St. Scholastica's College.

High school (developmental)—Assumption Antipolo, Colegio de Sta. Rosa, Don Bosco-Manila, Holy Family, Holy Trinity, Notre Dame of Greater Manila, Parel-Rosehill School, Parel-Woodrose, Philippine Science High, St. Bridget School, St. Mary's College, St. Scholastica's College-Manila and St. Theresa's QC.

High school (competitive)—La Salle Lipa, La Salle Antipolo, New Era University, PWU-JASMS, San Antonio de Padua College-Pila, Laguna, Sienna College, St James Academy-Malabon, St. Scholastica's College Manila, St. Theresa's-QC, UPIS and Southeville International School.

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ENNIFER Rosales (second from left) receives her trophy from sports dignitaries. From left is Philsoc chair Roberto agdanganan, POC chief Jose "Peping" Cojuangco and PSA president Jimmy Cantor.

NQUIRER'S Teddyvic Melendres hands major awardee smine Figueroa (archery) her trophy.

TAEKWONDO Olympian Marie Antoinette Rivero receives her award from the Inquirer's Francis Ochoa.

SIAN Pony baseball founder Rodolfo Tingzon gets feted by e Inquirer's Marc Anthony Reyes.

INQUIRER special publications manager Jong Arcano awards Rolly Vicente, who represented Francisco Bustamante.

NQUIRER'S June Navarro awards Jon Naguit, who presented X-Gamer Anjou Jellicoe Mauricio.

THE LATE darts legend Freddie Deen's children receive his posthumous award from the Inquirer's Jasmine W. Payo.

RENNY Reyes, representing billiards great Efren "Bata" eyes, receives an award from the Inquirer's Roy Luarca.

HORSEOWNER Hermie Esguerra and jockey Patti Dilema show off their trophies.

Air Force subdues Army, bags football crown, cash

THE PHILIPPINE Air Force Football Club soared past Philippine Army FC, 2-0, and pocketed the P100,000 grand prize in the championship of the first Play Soccer, Make Peace tournament recently.

The Army squad didn't march home empty-handed as its runner-up finish earned its booters an P80,000 purse.

Finishing third for the P60,000 prize was the Philippine Navy Football Club, while the Blue Guards Football Club came in fourth and bagged the P40,000 purse.

Though eliminated from the championships, the rest of the eight top football teams that participated still went home with P20,000 each.

These included Mendiola Football Club, Taft Football Club, FEU Football Cub and Diliman Football Club.

"It was a great way to start Play Soccer, Make Peace in the Philippines," tournament national project director Joey Sumiller said. "This year we promise to hold bigger and better tournaments as we lay out plans and preparations this early."

Play Soccer, Make Peace is a worldwide initiative to promote peace and well-being through the internationally popular game of football.

Sumiller and Philippine Football Federation president Juan Miguel Romualdez put together eight of the country's top football teams for the contest held at the Ultra stadium and University of the Philippines Diliman. Many of the players of the participating teams are among the best of the country and have participated in the recent Tiger Cup competitions in Malaysia organized by the Asian Football Federation.

8 Keys To Your Different Interests

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WNCAA competition resumes today

THE WNCAA season resumes play today with the athletics events at the Rizal Memorial Sports Complex and lawn tennis at the San Beda Alabang courts.

Tennis will be played until tomorrow, along with swimming, taekwondo and badminton.

College of Saint Benilde is the defending seniors champion in athletics, swimming and tennis.

In the juniors level, the defending champions are St. Stephen's High School (athletics), St. Scholastica's College (swimming) and Angelicum College (tennis).

The WNCAA 35th season is co-presented by Kotex and sponsored by adidas, The Philippine Star, RPN 9, Monster Radio RX 93.1, Pantene and Café Lupe, in cooperation with Cadbury, Goldilocks, Powerade, Molten, Mikasa and Centrum.

The WNCAA concluded the basketball, volleyball, indoor football and junior cheerleading events last year.

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Yao paces O'Neal, rival centers in All-Star vote

NEW YORK—Chinese center Yao Ming's lead over Shaquille O'Neal in the race to finish No. 1 overall in National Basketball Association All-Star game balloting has increased to more than 70,000 votes.

The Houston Rockets' center had 1,888,533 votes through three rounds of voting as of Thursday.

O'Neal, traded from the Los Angeles Lakers to the Miami Heat in the offseason, tops the Eastern Conference with 1,817,828.

Yao's lead among centers in the Western Conference is seemingly insurmountable: Sacramento's Brad Miller is second with 283,562 votes.

Fans can vote through Jan. 23, and All-Star starters will be announced Feb. 3.

The game is Feb. 20 in Denver.

Minnesota's Kevin Garnett, the reigning league Most Valuable Player award winner, is third overall, leading West forwards with 1,545,544 votes, followed by San Antonio's Tim Duncan (1,224,697).

Yao's teammate Tracy McGrady (1,469,005) is the top guard in the West, trailed by the Los Angeles Lakers' Kobe Bryant (1,362,409).

In the East, Detroit's Ben Wallace trails O'Neal at center with 560,484 votes. New Jersey's Vince Carter (1,294,646) and Orlando's Grant Hill (1,118,795) lead the forwards, while Philadelphia's Allen Iverson (1,154,074) moved ahead of Cleveland's LeBron James (1,151,688) as top guard. *AP*

Sura fuels Rockets with career game

HOUSTON—Bob Sura scored a career-high 35 points, including a game-clinching three-pointer with 1:02 left in overtime Thursday to lead the surging Houston Rockets to a 94-85 victory over the New Jersey Nets.

"I knew I had to step up," said Sura, playing on a knee that had been drained of fluid Tuesday. "I'm hanging in there. I'll fight through it as best I can and try to help our team."

Juwan Howard scored eight of his 12 points in the extra period, and a hobbled Tracy McGrady added 18 points for the Rockets, who matched a season-best three-game winning streak and moved two games above .500 (19-17) for the first time this season.

Jason Kidd narrowly missed a triple-double with 16 points, 10 rebounds and nine assists, and Vince Carter had 17 points for the Nets, who dropped their third straight and fifth in the past six games.

"I feel horrible for our guys," Nets coach Lawrence Frank said. "They gave a tremendous effort ... I was only disappointed with the result."

Kings 107, Jazz 93

In Sacramento, California, Peja Stojakovic scored 27 points, Chris Webber had 23 points and 15 rebounds, and Brad Miller had 21 points on 9-of-10 shooting for the Sacramento's win over Utah.

The Kings had just nine players in uniform for the second straight game.

Mike Bibby sat out with a sprained ankle, and lost Greg Ostertag and Maurice Evans to injuries during a physical game featuring plenty of hard contact and confrontations.

Carlos Boozer had 15 points, nine rebounds and seven assists for the Jazz, who followed up surprising victories over Phoenix and San Antonio earlier this week with their 10th loss in 12 games.

Lakers 98, Cavaliers 94

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant went down hard and did not return, though the Los Angeles Lakers were able to defeat LeBron James and Cleveland without him.

Bryant sustained what the team called a severely sprained right ankle and had to be helped off the court early. X-rays were negative, but Bryant will have an MRI on Friday.

Lamar Odom had 24 points, eight rebounds and seven assists, and Caron Butler added 21 points and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, who won for the third time in four games.

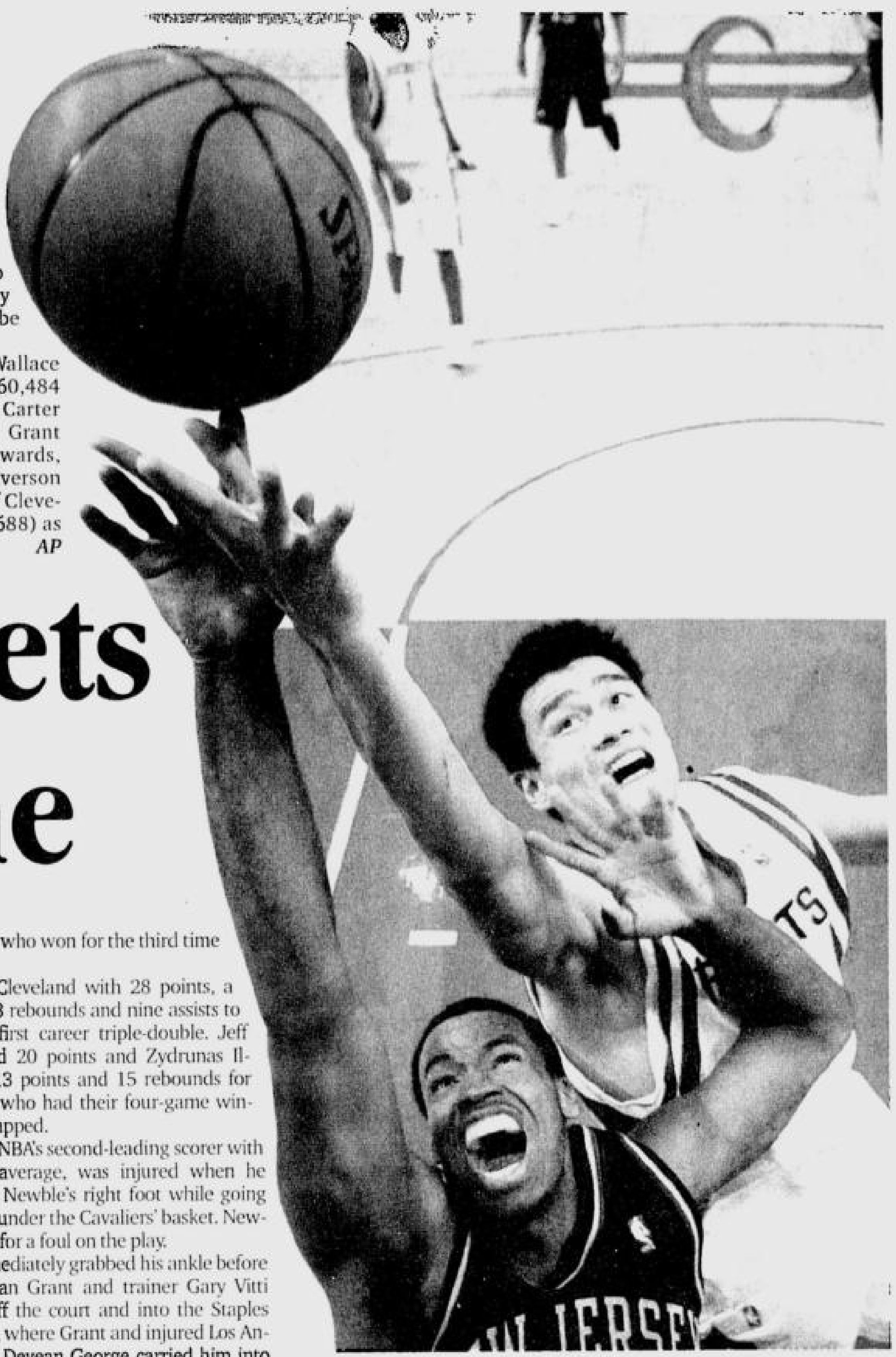
James led Cleveland with 28 points, a season-high 13 rebounds and nine assists to just miss his first career triple-double. Jeff McInnis added 20 points and Zydrunas Ilgauskas had 13 points and 15 rebounds for the Cavaliers, who had their four-game winning streak snapped.

Bryant, the NBA's second-leading scorer with a 28.2-point average, was injured when he landed on Ira Newble's right foot while going for a rebound under the Cavaliers' basket. Newble was called for a foul on the play.

Bryant immediately grabbed his ankle before teammate Brian Grant and trainer Gary Vitti helped him off the court and into the Staples Center tunnel, where Grant and injured Los Angeles forward Devean George carried him into the locker room.

Bryant left with 5:39 left in the first period and the game tied at 15. He had two points and three assists.

Meanwhile, lawyers for the woman accusing Bryant of rape want to interview the Los Angeles guard under oath as part of the suit she filed. *AP*



THE NEW Jersey Nets' Jason Collins (bottom) battles Houston Rockets center Yao Ming for a rebound. The Nets won on a day the league announced Yao continued to lead rival Shaquille O'Neal in the All-Star balloting. AP

KOBE Bryant, a cinch to start at guard in the West All-Stars, grabs his right ankle as he lies on the court in pain. AFP

Baseball adopts tough steroid program

NEW YORK—With some of its biggest stars under suspicion and lawmakers demanding action, Major League Baseball adopted a tougher steroid-testing program that will suspend first-time offenders for 10 days and randomly test players year-round.

The agreement was hailed by MLB management and its union Thursday as a huge step forward. But it was criticized by some as not going far enough because the penalties are less harsh than those in Olympic sports and amphetamines were not banned.

"I've been saying for some time that my goal for this industry is zero tolerance regarding steroids," MLB commissioner Bud Selig said.

A first positive test would result in a penalty of 10 days, a second positive test in a 30-day ban, a third positive in a 60-day penalty, and a fourth positive test in a one-year ban—all without pay. A player who tests positive a fifth time would be subject to discipline determined by the commissioner.

Under the previous agreement, a first positive test resulted only in treatment, and a second positive test was subject to a 15-day suspension. Only with a fifth positive test would a player be subjected to a one-year ban.

"It appears to be a significant breakthrough," Sen. John McCain said in Washington.

No player was suspended for steroid use in 2004, the first season of testing with penalties.

Since the old agreement was reached in 2002, baseball has come under increased scrutiny about steroids.

Barry Bonds, Jason Giambi and Gary Sheffield testified before a federal grand jury investigating the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative known as Balco. President Bush mentioned the steroid problem in last year's State of the Union address. *AP*

TSUNAMI RELIEF

Woods, NFL join world sports aid

ANAHEIM, California—The Tiger Woods Foundation is giving $100,000 to earthquake-tsunami relief efforts in Asia, and the PGA Tour is matching that amount.

Woods' foundation and the tour are donating the money to Give2Asia, with the money directed toward two groups aimed at providing sanctuary and relief to children affected by the tsunami.

The Rajaprajanukroh Foundation supports children who have been orphaned in tsunami-affected provinces. The Holt Sahathai Foundation provides services such as adoption, pregnancy counseling, foster care, and education for children in hospitals and orphanages through Thailand.

Woods' mother was from Thailand, although he said last week none of her family was affected by the Dec. 26 tsunami that killed more than 150,000 in 11 countries.

The National Football League and its teams, players and fans have raised and committed more than $4 million for tsunami relief efforts, including $1 million from the gridiron league and $1.5 million from Seattle Seahawks owner Paul Allen's charitable foundation.

New England Patriots owner Bob Kraft and the team's charitable foundation have raised $500,000 for the disaster relief. The Atlanta Falcons and owner Arthur Blank have raised $370,000. *AP*

Beltran, Mets woo slugger Delgado

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico—Mets executives met with Carlos Delgado on Thursday, hoping the tactic that helped land Carlos Beltran and Pedro Martinez would lure the free-agent first baseman to New York.

Already in Puerto Rico with Beltran, general manager Omar Minaya and three others met with the 32-year-old slugger in a San Juan hotel, Mets spokesman Jay Horwitz said.

"It was just kind of a meet-and-greet thing," Delgado's agent, David Sloane, said.

In his first visit to his native Puerto Rico since signing a seven-year, $119 million contract with the Mets on Tuesday, Beltran said the presence of two Latinos in New York's front office—Minaya, who is Dominican, and his special assistant Tony Bernazard, a Puerto Rican—gave the Mets a family appeal that made him lean toward the team.

And Minaya's visit to Puerto Rico along with several Mets officials sealed the deal for the 27-year old slugger.

Minaya and Bernazard met with Delgado along with Jeff Wilpon, the Mets' chief operating officer and son of owner Fred Wilpon, and Jim Duquette, senior vice president of baseball operations.

Delgado is also being pursued by the Marlins, and he and Sloane plan to meet Saturday in Florida with Marlins owner Jeffrey Loria and general manager Larry Beinfest.

"I would characterize this as a more significant meeting because Mr. Loria will be there and I will be there," Sloane said.

The Mets are hoping that their recent signings of Beltran and Dominican star Martinez will help sway Delgado, who has hit at least 30 homers in each of the past eight seasons for the Toronto Blue Jays. *AP*

Four share Sony Open lead; wind bedevils teenager Wie

HONOLULU—After scrambling to salvage a 5-over 75, Michelle Wie plopped down in a chair and playfully stuck out her bottom lip as if she had just been scolded.

The 15-year-old quickly found one positive note from a tough time Thursday in the Sony Open.

"At least I'm not in last place," Wie said.

Wie was better than 15 men on a blustery day at Waialae Country Club, but she was nine shots behind Stewart Cink, Brett Quigley, Tom Byrum and Hank Kuehne, who each shot 66 for a share of the lead.

Her dream is to become the first female to make the cut since the Babe Zaharias in the 1945 Tucson Open, and the odds are no longer in her favor.

"I think if I shoot under par tomorrow, if I end up at like 1 over par, maybe I'll make it," Wie said.

She didn't get much help when the rare Kona wind, which gusted up to 40 kph (25 mph), calmed slightly in the afternoon to stabilize the scoring. Scoring was 1 1/2 strokes higher than last year.

Wie wound up in a tie for 120th (she was 105th last year), and was four shots below the projected cut.

But she wasn't the only one who struggled in the wind.

Two-time defending champion Ernie Els had to birdie the last hole for a 71, his first round over par in the 17 rounds he has played at Waialae. Vijay Singh was hanging around the early leaders on the strength of an eagle at No. 9, but he took a sloppy bogey on the par-5 18th for a 69.

"It was hard hitting every shot—the drive, approach shot was difficult," Singh said. "It's tough for the boys over here, you know? Going to be tough for a girl here, too."

The comeback of the day belonged to South Africa's Retief Goosen, who hit his first two tees shots out-of-bounds, made 9 on the first hole and played the rest of the way 3 under for a 72.

Wie opened with a 72 last year at the Sony Open, then followed that with a 68 — the lowest score ever by a female competing on a men's tour—to miss the cut by one shot.

Given the conditions, her 75 wasn't that bad. And she hit several shots she didn't have last year, such as a knockdown driver to keep the ball low into a wind that caused palm trees to sway.

Brett Wetterich also played with Wie and had a 70.

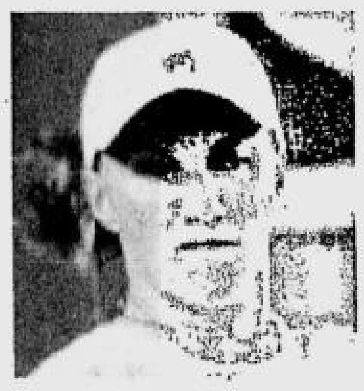
Hardly anyone noticed the leaders. Almost everyone at Waialae came to watch the 10th-grader from Punahou School try to prove she can play with the boys. *AP*

WIE: 'Maybe I'll make it.' AFP

Russian tsarinas threaten Grand Slam sweep

SHARAPOVA

MYSKINA


KUZNETSOVA

MELBOURNE—At the start of 2004, the Russians were coming. By the end of the year, having won three Grand Slam titles, they had arrived.

The days when Anna Kournikova, all style but no substance, was the lone standard-bearer for Russia's women are long gone.

Instead, there is now every chance that Russia could finish the Australian Open in possession of all four majors at once, underscoring the country's burgeoning dominance of the women's game.

A multi-pronged assault on Melbourne will be spearheaded by Wimbledon Champion Maria Sharapova, French Open queen Anastasia Myskina and the powerful US Open winner Svetlana Kuznetsova.

Just behind that trio of 2004 Grand Slam title-holders is Elena Dementieva, a beaten singles finalist at Roland Garros and Flushing Meadows last season and currently ranked sixth in the world.

In total, Russia boasts some seven players in the top 15 as the 2005 season gets under way, a statistics that suggests more glory is beckoning this year.

Of the crop of 'Tsarinas', Sharapova has commanded most attention, thanks to a one-sided victory over Serena Williams in the Wimbledon final last year, to say nothing of catwalk model looks that make her a marketing man's dream.

For Sharapova, 17, there is a simple reason for the sudden success of Russian women. "We work hard at what we do," she said. "We take it as our job. Everybody wants to be No. 1 in the world.

"2004 was beyond anybody's expectations for our country. We were in the mood to win and to get great results," she added.

But the simultaneous rise to the top of Russia's women has not been without its tensions, with Sharapova at the center of an ugly row late last year over her allegiance to the country of her birth.

The fiery Myskina has led the criticism, making headlines by threatening to withdraw from Russia's Fed Cup if Sharapova was picked for this year's campaign.

"I don't want to be on the same team with people who don't show respect to me as a person," said Myskina. "If she joins our team next season, you won't see me there."

Even the normally mild-mannered Kuznetsova could not resist joining the debate. When asked before last October's Kremlin Cup in Moscow which of the new Russian players was most popular internationally, she gave a catty reply. "Sharapova of course —but I don't know if you would call her Russian though," she said.

Myskina played down talk of a feud with Sharapova this week, insisting her gripe had been with her compatriot's father Yuri following his behavior at the WTA Tour Championships in Los Angeles.

"There was nothing between me and any of the other players, just me and a player's father—that's pretty much of it," Myskina said.

AFP

Hewitt extends win run; Stosur cruises to final

HEWITT exults after winning a point against Mirnyi.
REUTERS

SYDNEY, Australia—Lleyton Hewitt's winning streak over four tournaments at the Sydney International was extended to 18 matches Friday after the top-seeded Australian beat Max Mirnyi of Belarus, 6-7 (4), 6-3, 6-2, in a semifinal.

Australian Samantha Stosur advanced to the women's final on a walkover—the second day in a row she's had an opponent pull out—when third-seeded Elena Dementieva of Russia withdrew with heat illness.

On Thursday, America's Lindsay Davenport withdrew from her quarterfinal against Stosur with bronchitis. The top-seeded Davenport was one of five players to pull out injured or ill on Thursday at Sydney.

"I was dizzy and very weak, so I think that I'm having the symptoms of a heat illness," said Dementieva. "I have been playing my matches, singles and doubles, in the peak of the heat."

Dementieva's withdrawal also handed the doubles title to Stosur and fellow Australian Bryanne Stewart. The Australian pair were scheduled to play Dementieva and Ai Sugiyama of Japan in the final on Friday night.

Stosur, who lost in the final of last weekend's Gold Coast event, will play the winner of Friday's later semifinal between Alicia Molik of Australia and China's Peng Shuai in Saturday's singles final.

"It's not the way I want to be in another final," said Stosur. "Certainly having one walkover is a bit strange, but having two, it's a bit ridiculous.

"Any time you play a tournament the week before a Grand Slam, everybody is a bit careful about what they do."

Temperatures on the center court surface at the Olympic complex ranged from 40 C (104 F) to 45 C (113 F) on Friday, about 10 degrees warmer than the air temperature. Those are conditions similar to what the players can expect at next week's Australian Open in Melbourne.

Hewitt, who won here in 2000, 2001 and 2004, will play qualifier Ivo Minar, who beat fellow Czech Republic player Radek Stepanek, 6-1, 6-2.

The 23-year-old Hewitt broke Mirnyi's serve in the sixth game of the deciding set, pushing a stretched forehand to the open court on break point. In celebration, Hewitt pumped his fist toward the ground three times.

The Australian was tested in his next game, having to fight off two break points before holding for a 5-2 lead. He held three match points on Mirnyi's serve in the next game, winning the match after Mirnyi saved the first. *AP*

Federer, Roddick title tiff

MELBOURNE, Australia — Top-ranked Roger Federer and second-ranked Andy Roddick will meet in a possible preview of the Australian Open final in Saturday's Kooyong Classic exhibition tournament title match.

Andre Agassi will make a surprise appearance after that, returning from a hip problem that forced him out of an exhibition match against Roddick on Thursday, and had threatened his Australian Open campaign.

The four-time Australian Open champion will play Tim Henman following Saturday's final.

Federer advanced by beating Henman, 6-4, 6-2, in 61 minutes Friday, earning three match points with a forehand winner and closing with a booming ace down the middle.

Roddick withdrew from a match against Federer on the corresponding Saturday last year because of blisters. Now Federer said he's relishing a chance to compare himself against a close rival just two days from the start of the Australian Open.

"I'm looking forward to this prospect because it's always nice when the No. 1 and No. 2 play each other and it's going to be interesting to see two days before the Slam," said Federer, the defending Australian Open champion.

Despite the proximity of his first round Australian Open match against Fabrice Santoro, Federer said he wouldn't be holding much in reserve against Roddick.

He's only lost once in nine head-to-heads against Roddick and although the Kooyong tournament doesn't carry any ranking points, Federer said it's important to maintain his winning momentum.

AP

LIMOUSINES FLEET

Armstrong, Postal riders get glitzy welcome

SILVER SPRING, Maryland—Walking down a theatre aisle to the sound of loud music and a standing ovation, under the glare of spotlights, Lance Armstrong looked more like a rock star than a cycle racer.

Outside a fleet of limousines waited, with motorcycle police escorts, to whisk Armstrong and his teammates to an event on Washington's Capitol Hill after their formal presentation to sponsors, fans and the media at the American Film Institute's Silver Theatre this week.

Eight years ago, as he struggled to find a team to hire him after winning a tough battle against cancer, Armstrong likely never imagined this sort of welcome for his team.

The glitzy reception marked the distance that Armstrong has travelled since he first he won the Tour de France in 1999.

At the time, Armstrong was a fairly new member of the US Postal Service cycling team, which he joined in 1997 after being dropped by his former team, Cofidis, following his fight with testicular cancer that spread to his brain and lungs.

US Postal was a small, relatively unknown team eight years ago. This week the cyclists on the team, which has just changed sponsors and is now known as the Discovery Channel team, paraded in front of dozens of cameras and hundreds of people.

They waved to the crowd as they stood in the spotlight to be introduced, one by one. Though some looked uneasy and others bemused, most of the riders appeared to take the attention in their stride.

"The team has changed dramatically," said veteran George Hincapie, who joked about being introduced as the "elder statesman" of the team. "Thinking back, our first team presentation was at a restaurant with about 40 people total.

"Look at the room and look at all the team members," he said, gesturing to the packed theatre and the 28 riders standing on stage.

"We went from being an upstart team to being one of the best if not the best team in the world," said Hincapie, the only US Postal rider to compete in all six of Armstrong's Tour de France victories.

After Armstrong had made his grand entrance surrounded by photographers—a spectacle he may have become more used to since he began dating singer Sheryl Crow—he appeared relaxed as he joked about needing a bigger stage next time.

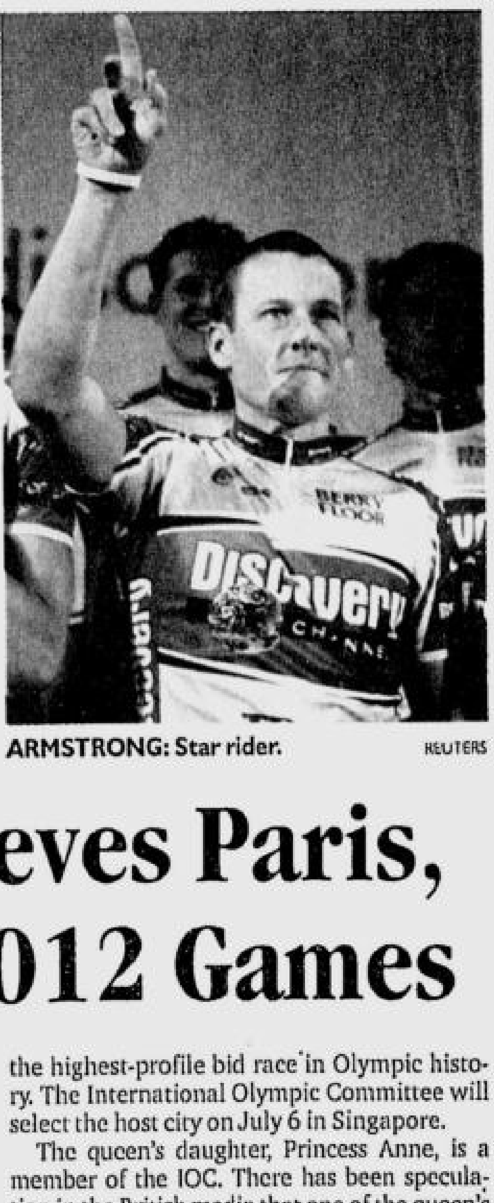
What a difference six Tour de France victories make.

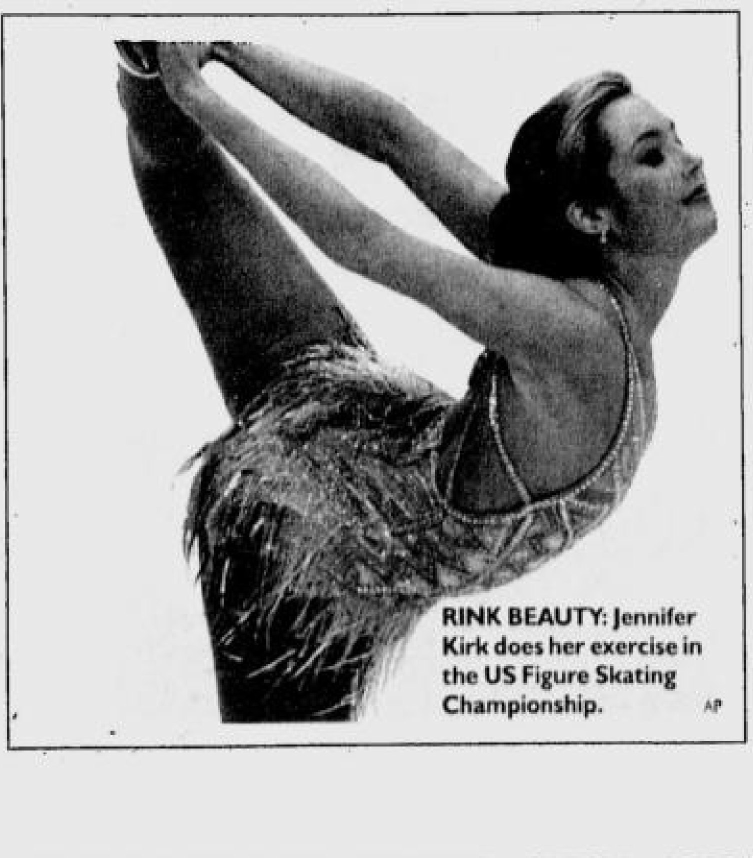
Armstrong is not the only one to change. The focus of the team is also entering a "new era," team officials said.

Since 1999, the entire team had concentrated on a single goal: helping Armstrong to win the Tour de France.

But now that Armstrong has made history by becoming the first cyclist to win it six times, he is not sure if he will enter the Tour this year.

Instead he will start the season by racing in the classic events and will wait until late April to decide whether to compete in France in July. *Reuters*


ARMSTRONG: Star rider.
REUTERS


RINK BEAUTY: Jennifer Kirk does her exercise in the US Figure Skating Championship.
AP

Queen Elizabeth II believes Paris, not London, will host 2012 Games

LONDON—London's bid for the 2012 Olympics has been stung by a reported dig by Queen Elizabeth II.

The queen was quoted in British newspapers Thursday as saying she thinks Paris will win the games because the French are more supportive of their bid than Britons.

The comment was allegedly made in a private conversation at a Buckingham Palace reception last month for 500 guests chosen for their contributions to civil life in 2004.

"I asked her what her views were on the Olympic bid and she said, 'Oh, I think that Paris has the best chance of winning,'" Amran Hussain, a 19-year-old student from east London, told The Times newspaper.

He reported the queen as saying: "I don't think the public in this country support it like the public in Paris do."

The Royal Palace press office said Thursday it couldn't verify private remarks made by the queen, but noted that she had hosted a reception for the London 2012 bid team in June.

London bid officials quickly moved to downplay the reported comments.

"We believe this is a bit of nonsense that is not going to have an impact on the bid," spokesman Mike Lee said. "It is not damaging. It is not verifiable that she said that."

Lee said public support for the bid was at its highest, with 75 percent of Britons and Londoners in favor.

Paris, London, New York, Madrid and Moscow are competing for the 2012 games in the highest-profile bid race in Olympic history. The International Olympic Committee will select the host city on July 6 in Singapore.

The queen's daughter, Princess Anne, is a member of the IOC. There has been speculation in the British media that one of the queen's grandsons, Prince William, could attend the Singapore meeting to support the bid.

Sports Minister Richard Caborn told the Times that the queen was probably right to consider Paris as the favorite, but said London was "closing the gap."

"All the opinion polls we are doing now show there's considerable support for the bid," he said. "I'm sure when she looks at the figures now she will be pleasantly surprised to see that Britons are behind the bid." *AP*

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Female Belly Laugh	Femalelaff	Marching Drums 1	Marching1
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4	Shine	Regine Velasquez	102113
5	Ikaw Nga	South Border	101450
6	Cry	Mandy Moore	102153
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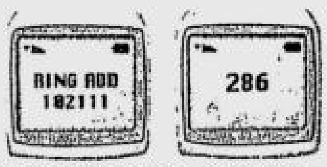

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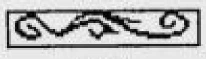
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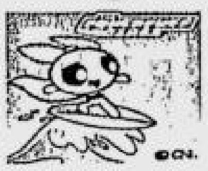
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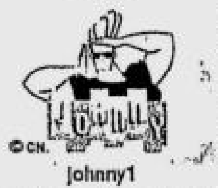
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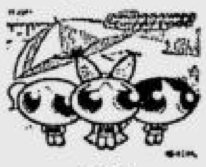
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E-mail: pr_saturday_special@inquirer.com.ph
Editor **Nestor U. Torre**
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Gael Garcia Bernal shines in new films

SHOW BIZ Q & A

Rito P. Asilo

***FROM** Marina Gulatan*: **"Please give us updates about Mexican heartthrob Gael Garcia Bernal. He was brilliant in 'Y Tu Mama Tambien' and 'The Crime of Padre Amaro.'"**

You're in luck, Marina. The 26-year-old heartthrob from "Amores Perros," who broke up with "Star Wars'" Natalie Portman in May last year, is currently topbilling two critically-acclaimed full-length features.

Gael plays the legendary Ché Guevara, leader of the Cuban Revolution, in Walter Salles' "The Motorcycle Diaries," a film adapted from the Cuban revolutionary's journals, that recount his life-defining experience when the then 23-year-old medical student traveled on a motorcycle across South America (Argentina, Chile, Brazil and Peru) with his best friend Alberto Granado (Rodrigo dela Serna) to finish their medical residency at a leper colony.

Destiny

The men start off with the same goals and aspirations, but by the time the film is over, it's clear what each man's destiny has become.

The film won the Audience Award at the San Sebastian Film Festival, and has recently been nominated in the Golden Globe's foreign language category. At last year's Cannes filmfest, it won three awards, including the Ecumenical Jury and the Technical Grand Prize.

In the other highly anticipated Bernal starrer, "Bad Education," the Mexican actor teams up with the irrepressible Spanish film auteur, Pedro Almodovar. The movie, in which Gael plays a crossdressing villain, examines the effects of sexual abuse and religion on the lives of two longtime friends (Bernal and Fele Martinez, who recently won the best actor prize at the European Film Awards for his performance in the movie).

Collaboration

We are particularly interested in Bernal's collaboration with Michel Gondry ("Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind"), "The Science of Sleep," about a man (Bernal) held captive by the people in his dreams. He tries to wake himself up to take control of his imaginings.

In "The King," editor James Marsh ("Howard's End," "Carrington") megs a searing drama about a troubled man (Bernal), recently discharged from the Navy, who returns to his childhood home in Texas to reunite with his father. William Hurt co-stars.

We have also seen Bernal in the Hollywood independent romantic-comedy, Jon Sherman's "I'm With Lucy" (2002), with Monica Potter, Henry Thomas and David Boreanaz, about a woman's blind dates with five handsome bachelors, and her quest for Mr. Right.

BERNAL. Plays Ché Guevara in "The Motorcycle Diaries," as well as a crossdressing villain in "Bad Education."

CABRERA. Churns out fluffy radio-friendly pop-rock.

Debut album offers pleasant surprises

By Noelani Torre

POP star wannabe Ryan Cabrera is an ideal target for those bemoaning the current state of the mainstream music scene. He's young, cute, churns out fluffy radio-friendly pop-rock, and he has Ashlee Simpson all over him in his music video.

It would be pretty easy to shoot him down, especially with him looking like a cross between a mallrat and a beach bum, but that would hardly be fair. So, let's take a look instead at what he's got to offer, music-wise:

Cabrera's debut album, "Take It All Away," is as bright and sunny as the singer's spiky gilt hairdo. Polished and hook-laden, the 12-song CD is as made-for-radio as a record can possibly get, and a lot of the songs in it bear a resemblance to the Goo Goo Dolls' more lightweight numbers.

Lead singer

No surprise there, as the aforementioned band's lead singer, John Reznik, happens to be the album's producer (and co-writer of one song). He also does additional guitar and background vocals on a couple of tracks.

We have to confess to being pleasantly surprised when we first listened to "Take It All Away." We weren't expecting much from Simpson's ex-boyfriend, particularly as his manager also happened to be Joe Simpson (Jessica and Ashlee's dad *cum* manager) —he looked as well-packaged as these two most recent examples of the power of savvy publicizing.

Fortunately, the guy has talent. Not outstanding, sure, but enough to make us stop and give his songs a closer listen. The album isn't difficult to listen to: Cabrera's voice is smooth and easy, and the production itself is even smoother. He does his own guitar-playing, which makes him appear more serious about his music.

Credits

We were feeling quite hopeful when we noticed his name in the songwriting credits, but then, we also noticed that he had at least one other person sharing the credit in all of the songs save one.

The other songwriters here are Sabelle Breer and Curt Frasca (who's done work for the ubiquitous Ms. Lavigne), and Guy Chambers (one of Robbie Williams' songwriters). With these contributors, you can't really tell who's contributing what, so we can't give

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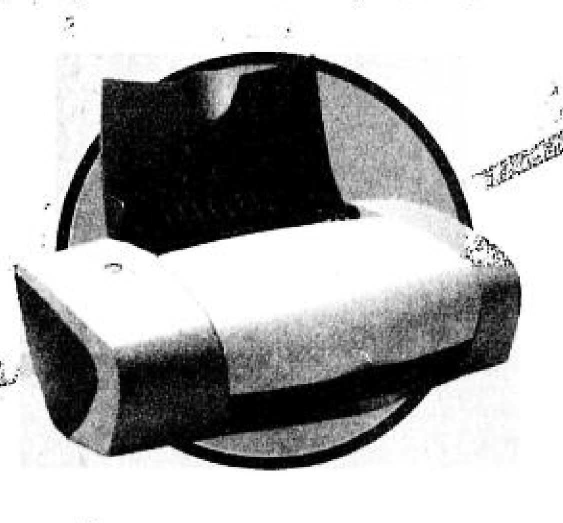

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Tale of two birthdays

By Nestor U. Torre

PETE AND BOOTS ROA. Exceptional persons who have done more than their share for the entertainment industry.

JANUARY is a special month for Pete and Boots Roa: Pete is turning 65, and Boots is marking her 60th year.

The popular couple is being feted by their appreciative friends and colleagues with separate celebrations: Pete on Jan. 19 at Merk's Bar Bistro, and Boots on Jan. 30 at the compound of Mowelfund, the movie workers' welfare organization she heads.

On both occasions, guests are urged, in lieu of bringing gifts for Pete and Boots, to make donations to Mowelfund. That would make our needy movie workers very happy, indeed!

Newscaster

Pete started his show biz career as the host of "Dance-O-Rama," the teen TV show where he and Boots met. He also became a producer-director at ABS-CBN, program director of Channels 3 and 9, newscaster on "Newswatch," and manager for overseas broadcast at Radio Veritas.

We first worked with Pete when he tapped us to direct "Two for the Road" at ABS-CBN. This opened up a new and exciting chapter in our life because it started our long and colorful friendship with Elvira Manahan.

Through the years, our appreciation for Pete's goodness as a person grew—especially for his quiet way of helping people. One such beneficiary of Pete's concern was the great jazz singer Annie Brazil (Richard Merk's mom).

Long after Annie's prime, Pete took us to a small dive in Ermita to hear Annie sing. She was down on her luck then, but, like Pete, we were bowled over by her exceptional talent, so we wrote about her and Pete did what he could to help revive the public's interest in her.

Renewed acclaim

Soon, Annie was back in her element, singing in the best venues in town. Annie deserved the renewed acclaim, but our point is, Pete helped in a big way to make it happen.

As for Boots, she was our student at UP. She later became a good friend, and we directed her in several plays, like the Filipino version of "The Miracle Worker," where she played Annie Sullivan to then child star Janice de Belen's Helen Keller.

When we directed Boots, we tried to get her out of her signature "sweet" image, so she could become a more vital performer.

We took this to an even gutsier level when we directed Pete and Boots in the challenging two-actor stage comedy, "The Owl and the Pussycat," where Boots played—a prostitute! That took a lot of doing on both our parts, but Boots was thrilled when her feisty, sexy performance elicited ovations from the audience.

Organizations

Aside from performing onstage, on TV and in the movies, Boots has developed herself into a broadcast executive, educator and industry leader. Aside form Mowelfund, she has chaired the Cinema Committee of the NCCA, among other arts organizations.

Individually, Pete and Boots are exceptional persons who have done more than their share for the entertainment industry. Together, they are a powerhouse team who fully deserve our gratitude and acclaim.

No wonder their friends and colleagues are raring to mount special tributes to them—to Pete on the 19th, and to Boots on the 30th! Call 757-4720.

Alex Parks heads for the big time

By Mary Ann A. Baustista

IF contemporary pop had a way of filtering out unique, unconventional singers, Alex Parks would be one such brilliantly against-the-grain anomaly.

Prior to winning the UK TV talent show, "Fame Academy 2003," she planned to pull herself out of year-long unemployment by moving to Amsterdam to learn to be a clown. It was her dad who entered her in the show.

Youngest contestant

"I didn't want to be famous, and I didn't realized how big 'Fame Academy' was going to be," she says. "I didn't prepare myself for the fact that I might win!" The then 18-year-old Alex found herself the youngest contestant (from among 12,000 hopefuls), chosen for the two-month stay at Witanhurst House in north London for the duration of the competition.

It wasn't just youth and the spiky hair that caught the imagination of judges and the thousands who voted her into the next round each week. From the start, her covers of Christina Aguilera's "Beautiful" and Danny Whitten's "I Don't Want To Talk About It" showed an emotional authority that made her stand out.

PARKS. Her debut album, "An Introduction to Me," features her winning song on "Fame Academy 3."

Her televised renditions of REM's "Everybody Hurts" and Coldplay's "Yellow" were heart-stopping, prompting one judge to sum up her performance in the Academy thus: "She's got passion, which you can't teach."

By the time of the finals, where she again sang gorgeously, few people doubted that Alex would come in ahead of Alistair Griffin. Nothing would be the same again for Alex. "It's been like a whirlwind of madness," she says. "If I had deliberately tried to change my life, I couldn't change it more."

"It's weird because I didn't enter the competition myself," she says. "I didn't think I'd get through the first audition anyway. Then, when I did, I kept getting further, and you get swept away. You want to see how far you can go. Before I knew it, I was on BBC!"

In her first album, "An Introduction To Me," she doesn't have the intention of getting trapped in one musical genre.

First single

The first single from the album, her winning composition, "Maybe That's What It Takes," which charted in the UK at No. 3, sets the scene as a beautiful piano ballad.

The debut album has already sold over 500,000 units. But, Alex is already looking ahead to a follow-up, where she intends to further stretch her wings.

"I am only 19, but I've probably been through more tough decisions than many of my friends who are of the same age. It doesn't matter who or how old you are, if you're writing about something that's true, then it's true. I really hope I do well, because I don't get the same heady feeling I get from music from anything else!"

Janno Gibbs goes back to his musical roots

By Jocelyn Valle

JANNO Gibbs unwittingly gives a free concert whenever he hits the shower in the townhouse unit that he shares with his wife Bing Loyzaga and their two daughters Alyssa and Gaby. "I practice my songs in the shower," he grins. "*Nakakahiya nga sa mga kapitbahay.*"

People living near the Gibbs' residence don't mind it, for sure. After all, Janno has one the most beautiful voices in the biz. And he's had the public under his musical spell since he sang James Ingram's "Whatever We Imagine" on "That's Entertainment" almost two decades ago.

Concerts

Since then, Janno has recorded six albums and performed in numerous sellout concerts, but he gets more recognition as a movie and TV comedian. Since last year, though, the mainstay of Channel 7's "Nuts Entertainment," "SOP," and "Eat Bulaga" has been paying more attention to his music.

He got in touch with the management of the newly-formed GMA Records when his contract with Viva Records expired. Then, he started writing and choosing materials for what became his next album, "Seven."

"When I record an album, I make sure that I can listen to the songs without feeling embarrassed," he points out. "So far, I still enjoy listening to my latest collection. *Wala akong pinagsisisihan.*"

GIBBS. His favorite bonding activity with daughter Alyssa is listening to music.

Working on "Seven" was bliss for Janno. "I got excited the moment I stepped inside the studio to start recording for the album," he recalls. "I enjoy the process that goes into making an album. I don't mind retakes as long as the record comes out perfect. *Mabusisi ako.*"

Covers

Though "Seven" carries covers of well-loved hits like "Heart of Mine," "Sana Dalawa ang Puso Ko" and "I'll Never Say Goodbye," Janno says that the strength of the 11-track album lies in its original compositions.

He himself penned four cuts: "Pinakamagandang Lalaki," "Fallin," "Umibig Muli" and "Kung Mamahalin Mo Lang Ako," as well as "I Will Be," a collaboration with his good friend Ogie Alcasid. Choosing the songs is the most difficult part, says Janno.

Melody

The 35-year-old son of Ronaldo Valdez relates that he doesn't have anybody in mind when he writes songs. He just lets his creative juices flow until he's able to marry the words with the melody in his mind. Then, he commissions a musician to arrange it.

"Listening to music is my favorite bonding activity with (daughter) Alyssa," he beams. "We love to watch concerts together. We got to see Justin Timberlake in the States."

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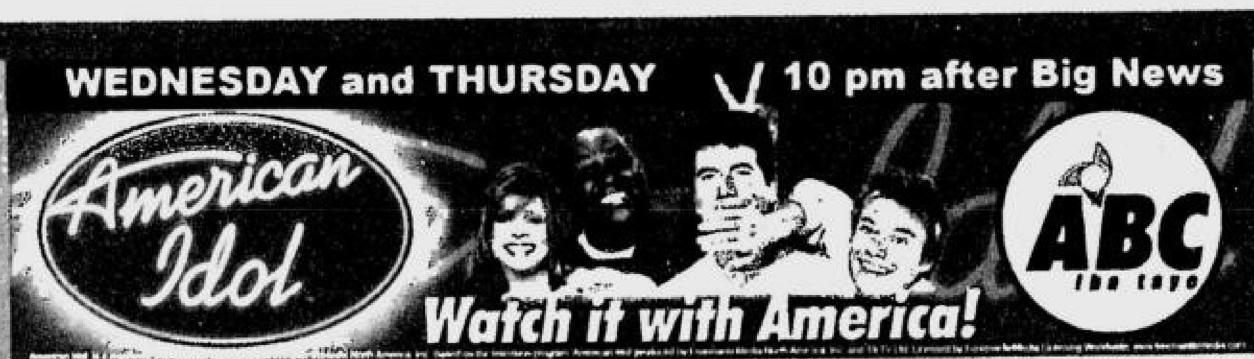

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Lifestyle Network	Carol Duvall	HGTV Special		Radical Sabbatical	Road & Track	Genuine Article	Food Fight	Date Plate	Emeril Live		Nigella Bites	Brini Maxwell Show	Royalty A-Z		Modern Girl's Guide	E! True Hollywood Story		Look For Less	Behind The Velvet Ropes
HBO				Second String			Blue Thunder (5:35 PM)				Red Water (7:20 PM)			HBO Sneak Peek, Hulk (8:50 PM)				Dumb And Dumberer: When Harry Met Lloyd	
Star Movies		Hart's War (3:10 PM)				The Bread My Sweet (5:15 PM)				Antwone Fisher		Me, Myself and Irene				Bulletproof Monk (10:55PM)			
Cartoon Network		The Detective Squad	Tom & Jerry Show	Swat Kats	Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles	X-Men Evolution	Justice League	Atomic Betty	Foster's Home For Imaginary Friends	Xiaolin Showdown	The Globetrotters Meet Snow White		The Looney Tunes Show	Cartoon Cartoon Show	Power Rangers Wild Force	Zoids: Fuzors	Time Squad	Harvey Birdman (11:15PM)	Justice League
ESPN				Big 12 Conf. Basketball-Kansas vs. Iowa st				NFL Playoffs Nfc Wildcard						NBA Mavericks vs. Spurs			World Pool Masters '04 Ann Zoo, Holland		
Disney Channel	Potatoes And Dragons	Sabrina's Secret Life	The Legend Of Tarzan	Wicked Science	Viva S Club	Martin Mystery/ That's So Raven/ Dave The Barbarian/Phil Of The Future				Lizzie Mcguire	Wonderful World Of Disney			My Wife And Kids	That's So Raven	According To Jim	America's Funniest Home Video	Wonderful World Of Disney	
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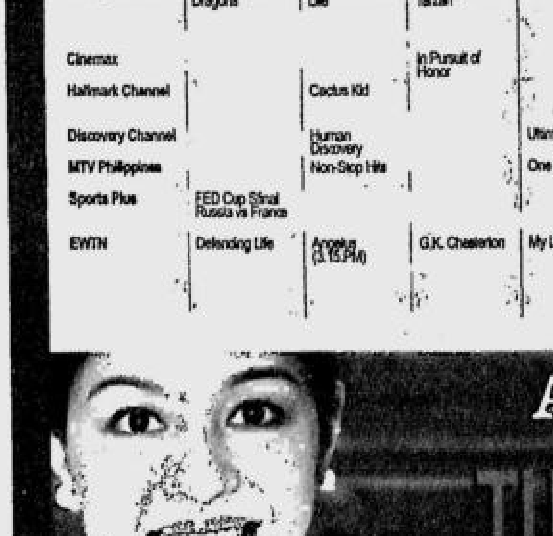
Discovery Channel		Human Discovery		Ultimate Cars	Building The Ultimate	Unsolved History				Wild Discovery				Rides		Human Senses		Extreme Discovery	
MTV Philippines		Non-Stop Hits		One Bad Trip	Cribs	MTV Rockd	Globally Dismissed	Non-Stop Hits		MTV Screen	MTV Urban Beats	Spring Break	Non-Stop Hits	MTV Divas		Non-Stop Hits		VH1 Hits/ Video Collection	
Sports Plus	FED Cup Sfinal Russia vs France						NFL Gameday	Superbowl6 Cowboys vs Dolphins		Monster Jam		Freestyle Motocross		Golf Globe 2002	NFL Gameday		Sony Open In Hawaii 2nd Rd.		
EWTN	Defending Life	Angelus (3:15 PM)	G.K. Chesterton	My Little Angels	The Donut Man	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns of Our Lady of Angels Monastery	Black And Roman Catholic	Catholic Compass		The World Over		Fr. John Corapi		Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	The Church Today	Life on The Rock Encore	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.



Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat-pangmulat
TUWING HUWEBES pagkatapos ng American Idol
Ating kabalitaan
Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV

KENKOY KLASIKS by Tony Velasquez celebrating 75 years

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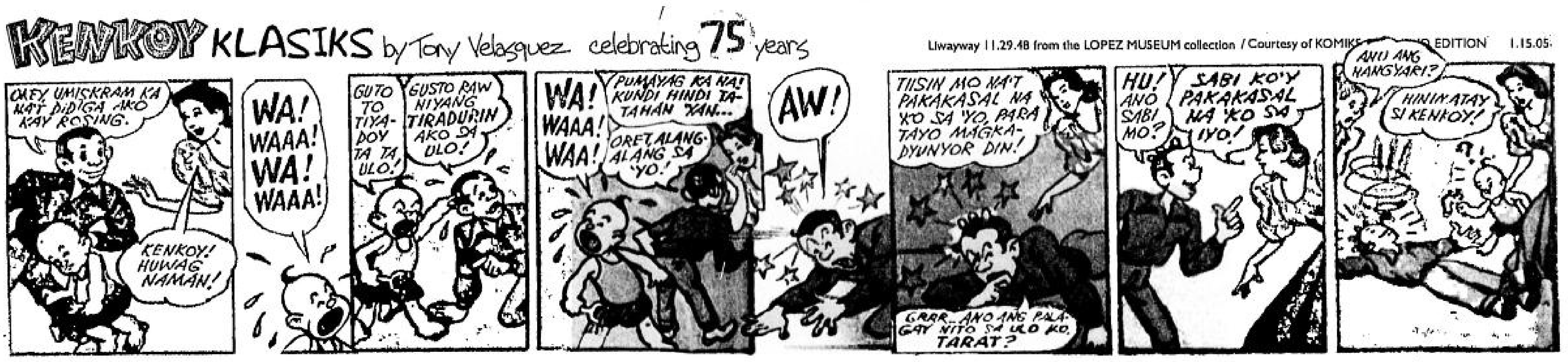
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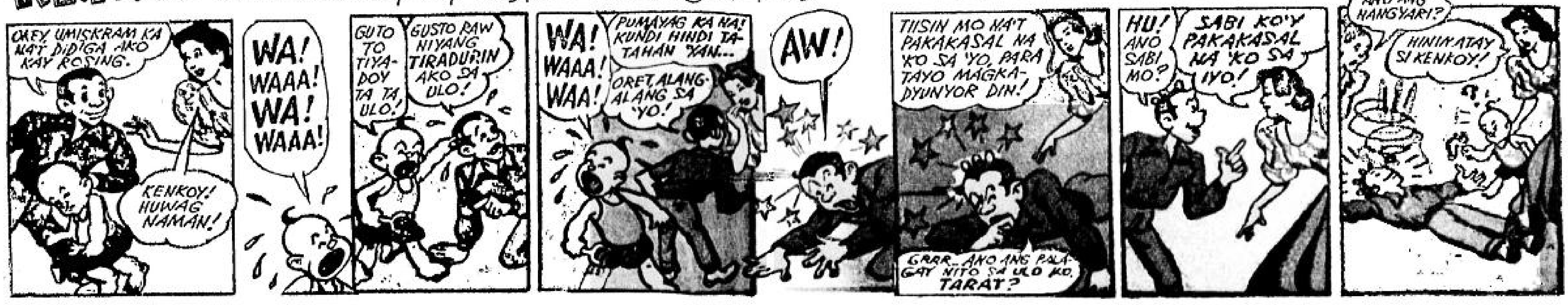
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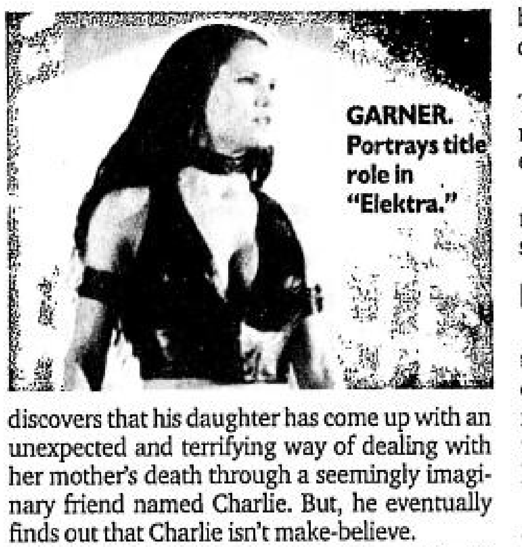

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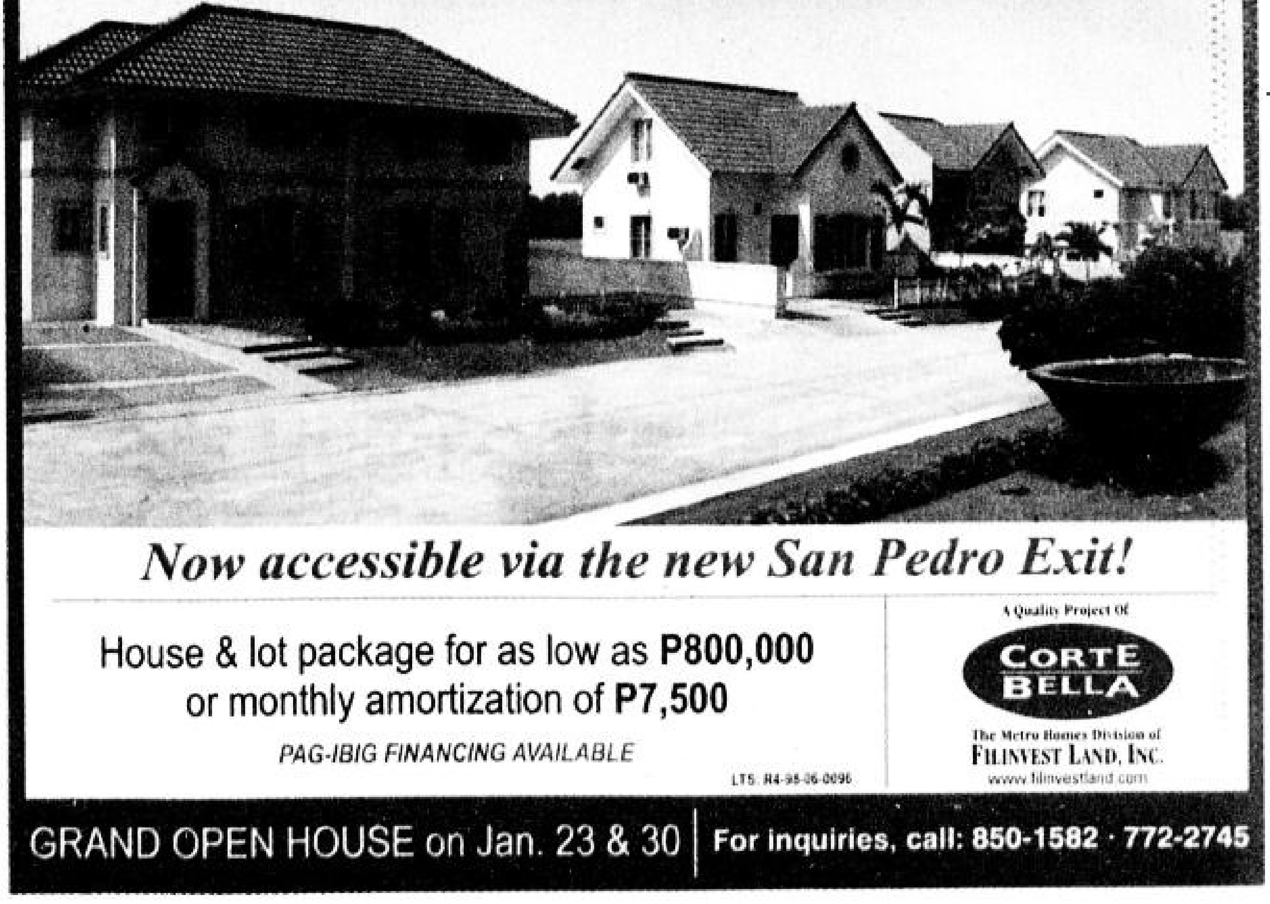
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Led Zeppelin tune tops rock poll

BRITISH quartet's "Stairway to Heaven" was adjudged greatest song in its genre.

LONDON—Perennial rock favorite, "Stairway to Heaven," by British group Led Zeppelin is the greatest rock music song of all time, a new poll said recently.

The rambling epic from 1971 obliterated the opposition—all songs from the 1970s—in the survey by British specialist radio station Planet Rock, gaining more than 70 percent of the vote.

Brevity

Other songs also not noted for their brevity: "Free Bird," by Lynyrd Skynyrd, and Queen's six-minute rock-opera hybrid, "Bohemian Rhapsody," from 1975, came in second and third, respectively.

The Top 10 was dominated largely by long-defunct groups, with Led Zeppelin taking up three of the places, while the most recent favorite was "Highway to Hell," by Australia's AC/DC, from 1979.

"The No. 1 may be seen as a rock cliché, but the truth is that, it's probably the only rock song ever written that most fans can agree is a classic," said Planet Rock presenter Mark Jeeves. "After all these years, there's still nothing to touch it."

The Top 10: (1) Led Zeppelin—Stairway to Heaven; (2) Lynyrd Skynyrd—Free Bird; (3) Queen—Bohemian Rhapsody; (4) Deep Purple—Smoke on the Water; (5) Black Sabbath—Paranoid; (6) Led Zeppelin—Whole Lotta Love; (7) The Eagles—Hotel California; (8) Led Zeppelin—Rock and Roll; (9) AC/DC—Highway to Hell; (10) Jimi Hendrix Experience—All Along The Watchtower. *AFP*

JAZZ crooner goes to Broadway.

Harry Connick Jr. to star in 'The Pajama Game'

NEW YORK—Harry Connick Jr., the crooning heartthrob and jazz stylist, will star next season in a Broadway revival of "The Pajama Game," one of the musical theater's biggest hits of the 1950s.

Connick will play the role originated in 1954 by John Raitt, according to Jeffrey Richards, a co-producer of the revival. Richards called Connick "an actor of enormous charisma and skill, a wonderful singer and a bona fide star."

The performer, best known these days for his role as Leo, the duplicitous husband on television's "Will & Grace," will begin rehearsals after Labor Day. The musical will open in November, Richards said recently.

Labor unrest

"The Pajama Game," which has a score by Richard Adler and Jerry Ross, tells the story of labor unrest in an Iowa pajama factory, and the romantic involvement between the plant supervisor (the role Connick will play) and a union activist, portrayed in the original by Janis Paige.

No other casting has been announced, although Richards said the production will be directed and choreographed by Kathleen Marshall, currently represented on Broadway by "Wonderful Town."

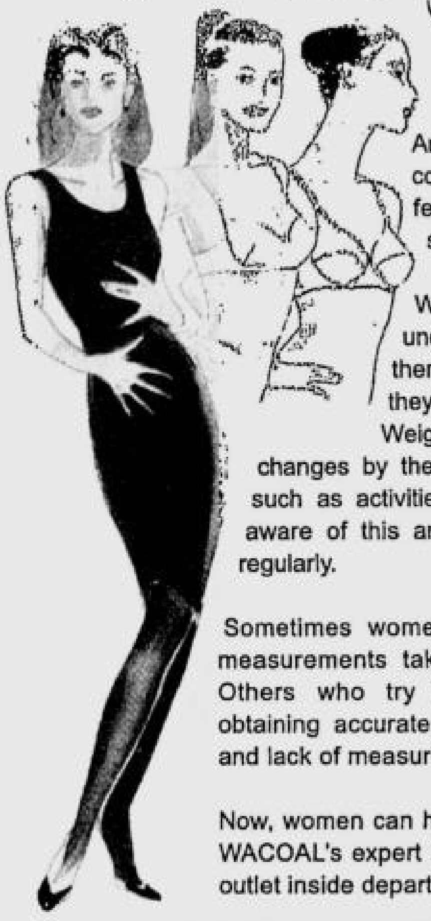
Adler is writing two new songs for the score, which includes such hits as "Hey There," "Small Talk," "Steam Heat" and "Hernando's Hideaway." The original book by George Abbott and Richard Bissell will be revised by playwright Peter Ackerman, who co-wrote the screenplay for the movie, "Ice Age."

Connick appeared on Broadway with his band in 1990, and he wrote the score for "Thou Shalt Not," a musical based on Emile Zola's novel, "Therese Raquin," transplanted from France to New Orleans. It had a three-month run on Broadway in 2001. *AP*

WACOAL NEWS

Wacoal

Are you Looking For the Perfect Fit?



Amazingly, majority of women don't wear the correct size of underwear. This results to a feeling of discomfort, bad posture and sometimes even breathing difficulties.

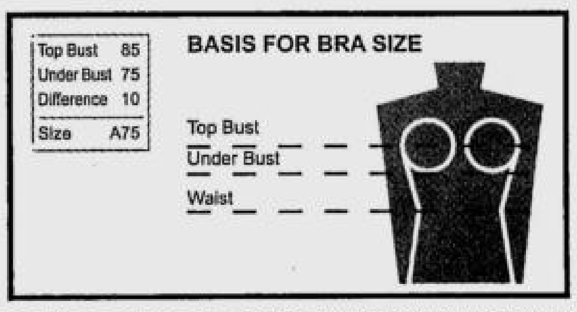
Women often make the mistake of buying underwear that is either too small or too big for them. It's simply because they get used to what they were wearing for the last months or years. Weight may remain the same but one's figure changes by the days and season due to various factors such as activities, health and growth. Women should be aware of this and they should check their measurement regularly.

Sometimes women purposely skip or fail to have their measurements taken when they shop just to save time. Others who try measuring themselves have difficulty obtaining accurate measurements due to distorted posture and lack of measuring skills.

Now, women can have their measurement taken perfectly by WACOAL's expert Beauty Advisers. Just go to any WACOAL outlet inside department stores.

It is important to know the correct size. Wearing the right undergarment size will not only give comfort, but most importantly, it will also provide the necessary support to enhance the body proportions.

Brassiere size is based on the underbust measurement. The cup size is determined by the difference between the topbust (highest point of the breasts) and the underbust (vergeline - below the breasts curvature). To ensure that you're getting the right size, choose the brand that uses the international standard of measurement like WACOAL.



The Fitting Wacoal Spokesperson

The name Abbygale Arenas – de Leon has always been associated with Filipina beauty.

She has been the embodiment of the Filipina beauty early on in her career. She won the search for Supermodel of the World, Philippines in 1992. Five years later, she was crowned Binibining Pilipinas. She even did our country proud when she was chosen Ms. Photogenic in the renowned Ms. Universe Beauty Pageant, back in 1998. Now, a wife and a mother, Abby was included in 2004 Mega Magazine's list of Top 10 Most Beautiful Women in the Philippines.

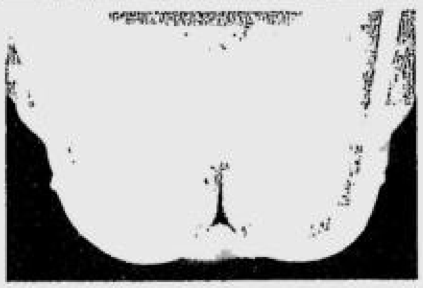
With all these recognitions under her belt, she sought other avenues to advocate Filipina beauty. She shared her expertise as a beauty and image consultant, columnist, make-up artist, and television commentator on beauty and image enhancement for GMA 7 and ABS-CBN 2.

To keep abreast with international advancements in beauty, she even went through a seminar and training on image enhancement in New York. She also underwent training on professional beauty make-up in Hollywood, Los Angeles.

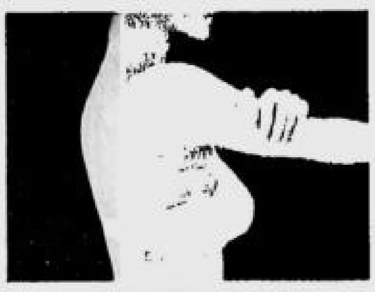
Wacoal shares Abby's desire to impart knowledge about beauty and image enhancement. This is the reason why Abby was chosen to be the spokesperson for Wacoal's 2005 Perfect Fit Campaign. Both Wacoal and Abby believe that the proper fit of brassiere will help women in their pursuit for true beauty.

Wearing the brassiere that perfectly fits would not only enhance a woman's physique and proportion, but will also improve her level of comfort and eventually her confidence. Having the perfect fit can actually enhance one's beauty and image.

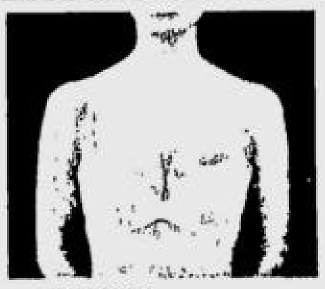
Ms. Abbygale Arenas – de Leon



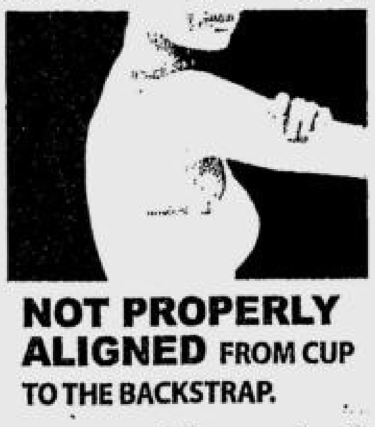
BRA CUP TOO SMALL FOR THE BUST SIZE.



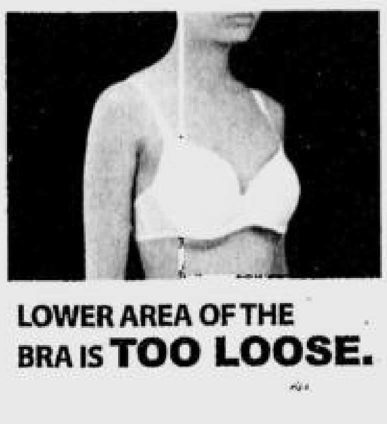
SHOULDER STRAP IS TOO TIGHT.



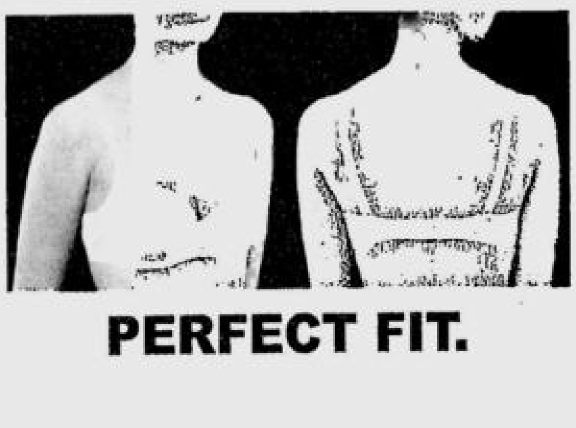
CUP SIZE TOO SMALL.



NOT PROPERLY ALIGNED FROM CUP TO THE BACKSTRAP.

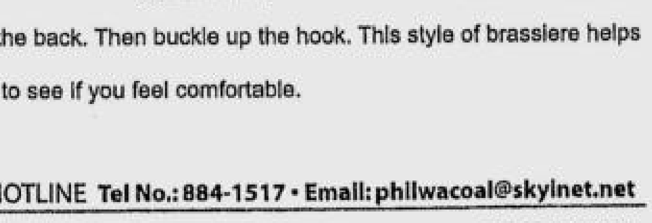


LOWER AREA OF THE BRA IS TOO LOOSE.



PERFECT FIT.

Here are the right procedures in wearing a bra:



1. Put both your arms through the shoulder straps to have the bra hanging on the shoulders. Use both hands to hold the lower hem of the bra-cups.
2. Bend your body slightly forward to allow both breasts to slip fully inside the bra-cups. Then, buckle up the back hook.
3. Adjust the shoulder straps; gather the breasts from the sides towards the center into the bra-cup.
4. When wearing a bra with a front hook, slip in both arms through the straps, pull down the sides from the back. Then buckle up the hook. This style of brassiere helps enhance your bustline beauty.
5. Once you've tried the undergarment on, raise both arms, bend your body and generally move around to see if you feel comfortable.

Consider all these and you will find a bra that will suit you perfectly.

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1 OCEAN'S 12	1 KUNG FU HUSTLE	1 KUNG FU HUSTLE	GUARANTEED SEATS 1 KUNG FU HUSTLE 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:35, 9:40, 11:45	1 OCEAN'S 12
2 BLADE: TRINITY	2 OCEAN'S 12	2 RAISE YOUR VOICE	GUARANTEED SEATS 2 OCEAN'S 12 1:10, 3:40, 6:10, 8:40, 11:10	2 BLADE: TRINITY
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE	3 BLADE: TRINITY	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 OCEAN'S 12 [illegible]	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30	3 ONE MISSED CALL
4 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN	4 RAISE YOUR VOICE	4 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN	GUARANTEED SEATS 4 RAISE YOUR VOICE 2:00, 4:20, 6:40, 9:00, 11:20	4 2046
5 RAISE YOUR VOICE		5 ENTENG KABISOTE	GUARANTEED SEATS 5 BLADE: TRINITY 2:50, 5:00, 7:10, 9:20, 11:30	5
		6 BLADE: TRINITY		
		7 HAPPY TOGETHER		

GB1 GREENBELT 1	
1	KUNG FU HUSTLE 11:20, 1:25, 3:30, 5:35, 7:40, 9:45
2	OCEAN'S 12 11:00, 1:10, 3:40, 6:10, 8:40

At the Activity Center

GLORIETTA	ALABANG TOWN CENTER	AYALA CENTER CEBU
GRAND FIESTA SALE January 14 to 31, 2005	GRAND FIESTA SALE January 14 to 31, 2005	METRO EVENT WITH BEA ALONZO January 15, 2005

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GREENBELT 2	GREENBELT 3
GRAND FIESTA SALE January 14 to 31, 2005	GRAND FIESTA SALE January 14 to 31, 2005

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Alabang Town Center:
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Ayala Center Cebu:
January 13 to 16
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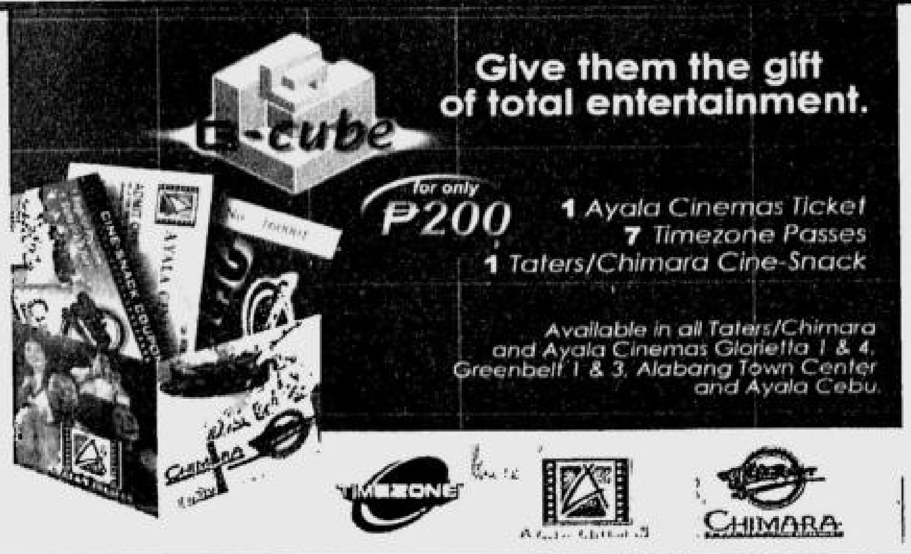

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AYALA CENTER ALABANG TOWN CENTER AYALA CENTER CEBU LoveMall!

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Disaster and technology

STREET SMART

Mandy Navasero

TEN days after super typhoon Yoyong wreaked havoc on the northeastern side of Quezon, I photographed Brgy. Tignoan, where a resort building collapsed and buried some 160 people who took shelter in it.

It was like the aftermath of war, as if air strikes and bombs had struck down trees and houses. Residents lined up on the streets to wait for relief goods. Some of them continued to dig for what was left of their buried belongings, while others were already building temporary shelters.

The irony of it all was, they couldn't use the logs scattered around after the total log ban was issued by the president.

A resident said: "When the first batch of relief goods was brought to us, our *barangay* captain and *kagawad* took over. We received two kilos of rice each and a few cans of sardines. We managed with these for two days.

"More relief goods came, but surprisingly, they weren't distributed. So, I made a deal with my neighbors: We agreed that as soon as the relief goods arrived, we would distribute them directly to our fellow victims," he said in Filipino.

Food and clothes

Pastor Jun Cebanico of the Taytay, Rizal-based National Council of Christian Community Churches joined his group's efforts to distribute food and clothes right after the storm had left.

"There is so much bureaucracy in the system. We heard stories of *barangay* officials, *kagawad* and politicians hoarding the goods donated by groups based in Metro Manila. It is sad.

"What we did was, we organized fellow church members to serve as direct distributors of donations," he said.

It must be noted that even though Real was just three hours away from Metro Manila, there were no means of communication available in the area except for Globe's cell phone service. And, of course, only a handful of barrio folks can afford a cell phone.

Vital

In times of disaster, cellular phones have become vital. This was proven by a group of medical missionaries, Day by Day, who coordinated with their city-based center via digital technology.

The Makati-based Christian fellowship, offered free services—including minor surgery. They also provided spiritual and psychological counseling.

Down on the beach, there were more logs at the shoreline. Six unclaimed bodies wrapped in black bags were half buried in the sand.

The tragedy in Quezon were attributed to legal *and* illegal loggers alike. "Legal" loggers are businessman with political connections.

If we continue to destroy our environment, no amount of reconstruction can guarantee that this tragedy will not happen again.

Email mandynavasero@photopro.com.ph

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3 (DOLBY) BLADE TRINITY
4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

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4 KUNG FU HUSTLE

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2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DOLBY) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS

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5 BLADE TRINITY

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3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 PANAGHOY SA SUBA

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
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Jade Cinema
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1 (DOLBY EX) KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 BLADE TRINITY
3 (DTS ES) OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 SO HAPPY TOGETHER

Cine Nepo
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1 HAPPY TOGETHER
2 BLADE TRINITY
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4 (DTS) OCEAN'S TWELVE

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1 AISHITE IMASU 1941
2 ENTENG KABISOTE
3 (DOLBY) ALEXANDER
4 (DTS) SPIRIT OF THE GLASS

Centre Plaza Cinema
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2 SO HAPPY TOGETHER
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3 PANAGHOY SA SUBA
4 SAPLOT
5 OCEAN'S TWELVE

DASMARIÑAS (046) 852-2125 [illegible]
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2 OCEAN'S TWELVE
3 SALAT SA LIGAYA
4 BAD SANTA
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE

ANGELES (045) 892-2348
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 SEED OF CHUCKY
3 KUNG FU HUSTLE
4 OCEAN'S TWELVE

IMUS [illegible]
1 KUNG FU HUSTLE
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 BLADE TRINITY
5 ENTENG KABISOTE
6 THE GHOST

STARMILLS (045) 875-1927 (045) 961-5270
1 OCEAN'S TWELVE
2 SALAT SA LIGAYA
3 SEED OF CHUCKY
4 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
5 BLADE TRINITY
6 KUNG FU HUSTLE

BACOLOD [illegible]
1 BLADE TRINITY
2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE
4 GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
5 THE GHOST
6 SUPERBABIES: BABY GENIUSES 2

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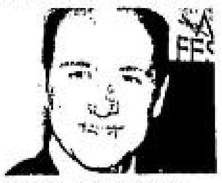

SPACEY. Couldn't find the right person to be at the helm of Bobby Darin biopic.

Spacey directs 'Beyond the Sea'

CHICAGO—Kevin Spacey didn't get into many fights with his director in "Beyond the Sea." That's largely because Spacey was himself in the director's chair.

Spacey told the Chicago Sun-Times that the hardest part about directing himself in the Bobby Darin biopic was making sure it didn't become a vanity project.

"I wanted to make sure that the other actors' roles were fully rounded," he said. "I had lots of help. I had a wonderful production crew who worked as my eyes and ears. There was no way I was out there alone.

Trust

"I learned a long time ago you had to learn how to direct yourself any time you were on a set with a director you didn't quite trust. You have to do that to save yourself as an actor." Spacey chose himself as the director only out of desperation.

"I ended up directing because I couldn't find the right person to do it!" he said. "It's not a job I was looking for, believe me. It's just that I wanted to tell this as a nonlinear story, and we needed to break the rules, because the story of Bobby Darin was about a man who broke rules." *AP*

Prince...

From page A3-4

Other acts in the top 10: Van Halen, Kenny Chesney, Sting, Toby Keith and Elton John.

It was a good year for country music: Chesney's tour had a total gross of $50.8 million, and Keith's grossed $43.7 million. Tim McGraw, Shania Twain and Alan Jackson's tour with Martina McBride were also among the top 25.

Baby boomers

"Just because baby boomers are older now doesn't mean that they turn into Glenn Miller Band fans," Bongiovanni told the AP recently.

Usher and John Mayer were two of the younger acts to gross over $20 million.

"I don't know if today's kids look at music the same way the aging baby boomers do," Bongiovanni said. "We don't seem to be developing the long-term headliners."

A factor could be the cost of tickets, which for the top 100 acts came at a record average of $52 each.

The most expensive concert ticket? Elton John, at an average of $158 per ticket. *AP*

MAYER. One of younger acts who could sell tickets.

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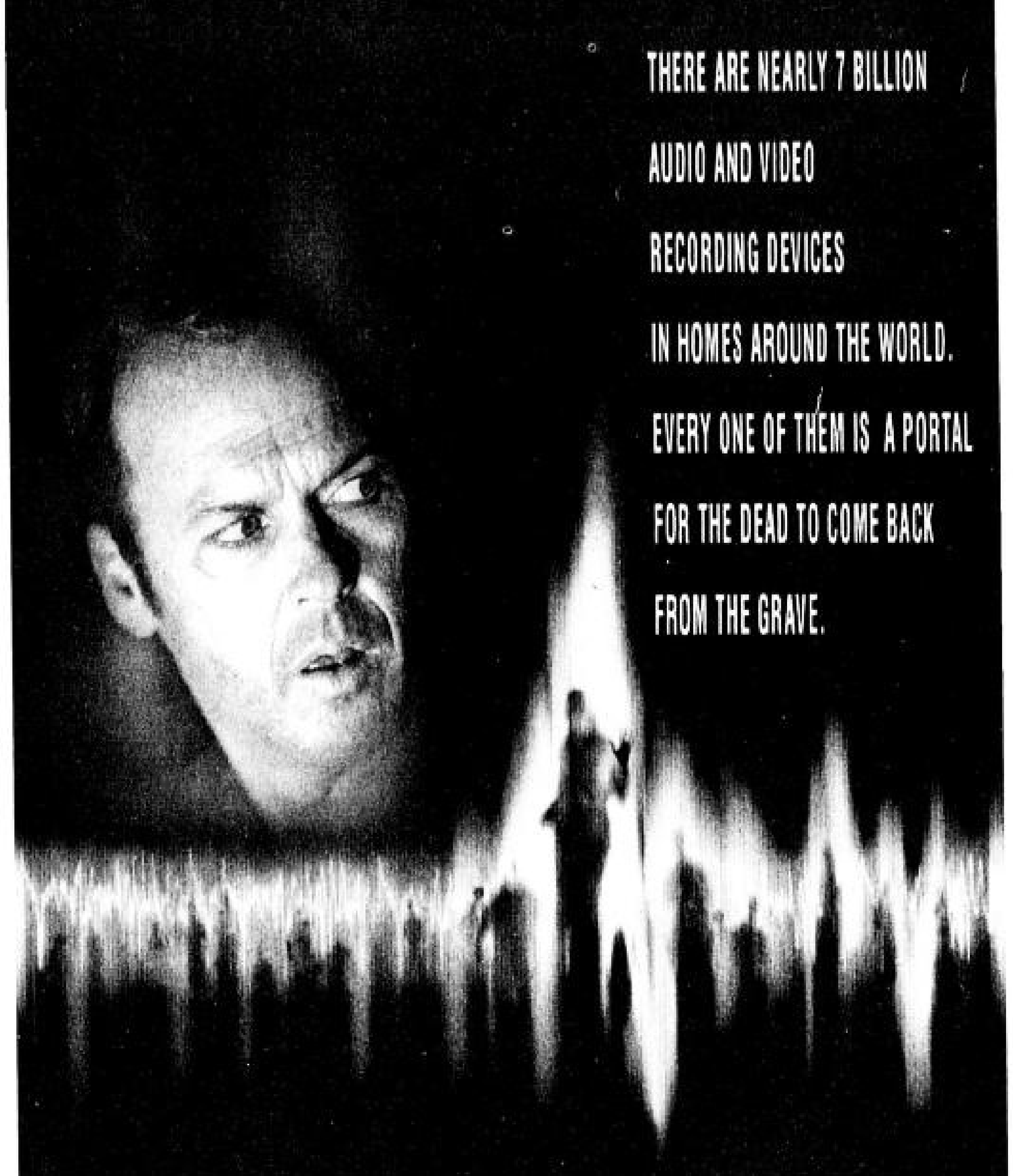

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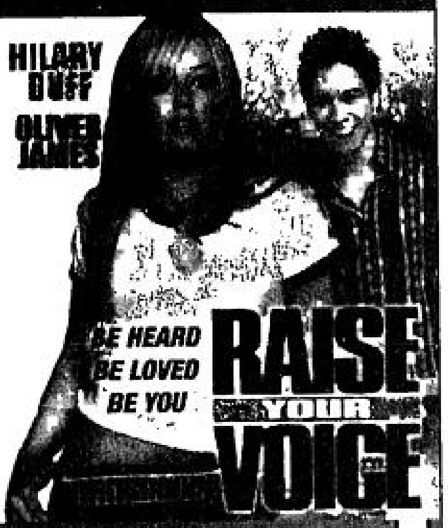

HILARY DUFF
OLIVER JAMES
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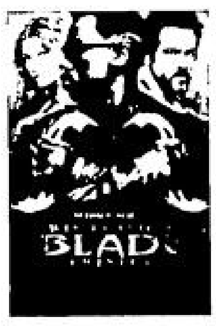

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2. BLADE TRINITY
3. KUNG FU HUSTLE
4. SO HAPPY TOGETHER
5. MANO PO 3
6. ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city marilao
1. KUNG FU HUSTLE
2. ONE MISSED CALL
3. BRIDGET JONES 2
4. SO HAPPY TOGETHER

sm city baguio
1. SO HAPPY TOGETHER
2. FORGOTTEN
3. HELLWOLF
4. OCEAN'S TWELVE

sm city bacoor
1. IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN
2. SO HAPPY TOGETHER
3. KUNG FU HUSTLE
4. OCEAN'S TWELVE
5. BLADE TRINITY
6. ENTENG KABISOTE
7. RAISE YOUR VOICE
8. MANO PO 3

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1. ONE MISSED CALL
2. ENTENG KABISOTE
3. OCEAN'S TWELVE
4. BIRTH

sm city dasmariñas
1. KUNG FU HUSTLE
2. SPIRIT OF THE GLASS
3. OCEAN'S TWELVE
4. ENTENG KABISOTE

sm city lucena
1. AFTER THE SUNSET
2. DARKNESS
3. BRIDGET JONES 2
4. ENTENG KABISOTE

VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

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1. "HANDUMAN" MUSICAL CONCERT
2. OCEAN'S TWELVE
3. GEORGE AND THE DRAGON
4. SO HAPPY TOGETHER
5. PANAGHOY SA SUBA
6. DARKNESS
7. 2046
8. BLADE TRINITY

sm city iloilo
1. HONEY
2. RESERVED
3. HELLWOLF
4. BIRTH
5. OCEAN'S TWELVE
6. BLADE TRINITY
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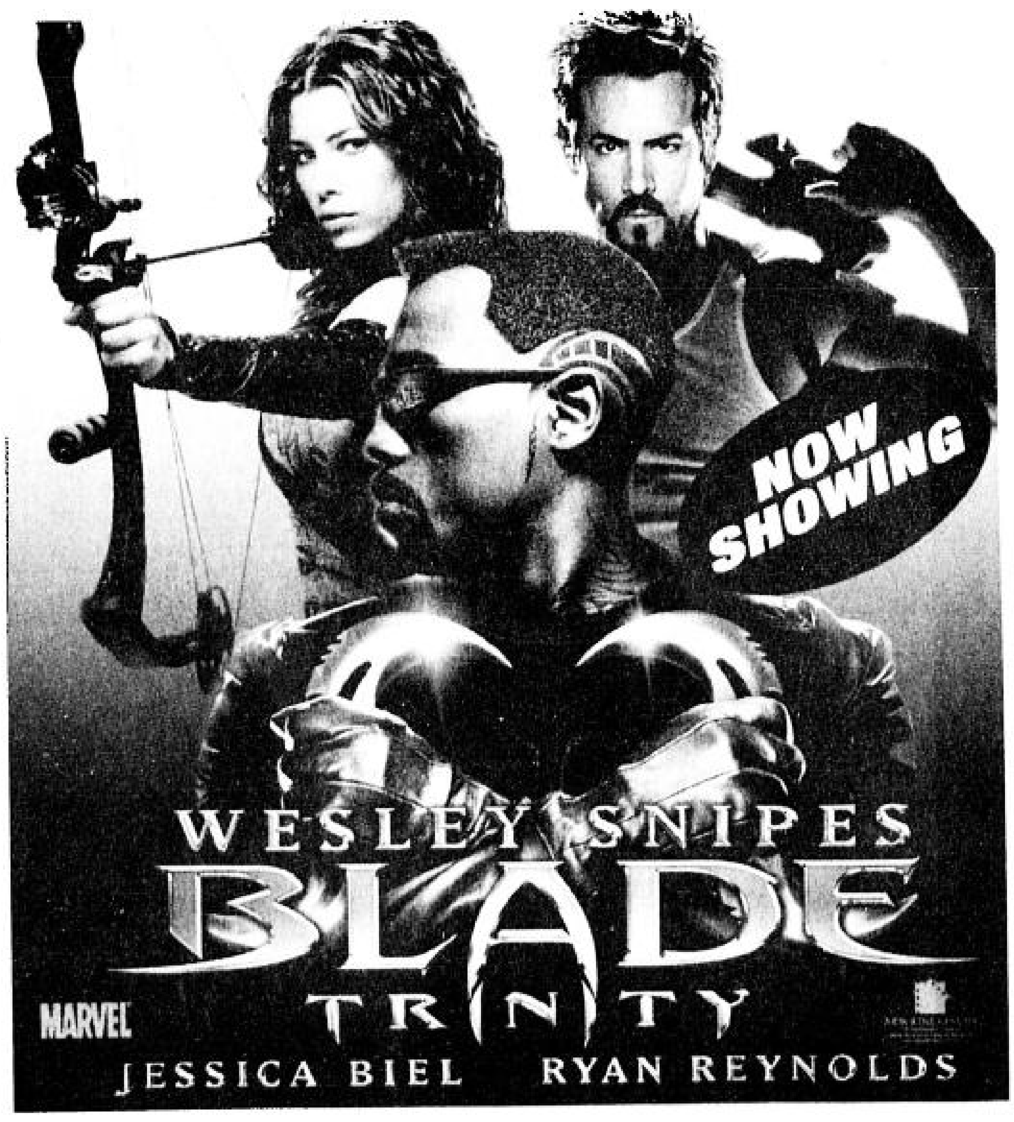

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Inactive action stars experience fall from macho grace

By Nestor U. Torre

OLD Filipino action stars never die, they just end up on television.

That's the sad comeuppance for most of our action stars these days, even for those who aren't on the wrong side of 50.

Time was when they were lording it over the movie landscape. Many a young male dramatic lead learned to do a few stunts and handle a gun so he could make the transition to acting in action films, where the really big bucks were.

Most expensive

Alas, the film times have really changed, and no new big actioners with the exception of this month's "Uno," starring Ronnie Ricketts, are being produced these days. As the local movie industry tries to survive the long slump it's been experiencing, producers have cut down on their budgets, and action films, being the most expensive to produce, have been among the first to go.

Action stars also have themselves to blame for their sudden fall from grace. When action films were blockbusters at the box office, their stars got cocky and demanded huge talent fees that ate up most of their starrers' production budgets.

Not satisfied with the megamillions they were making, the bratty action stars also insisted that they line-produce their movies, and be given the right to choose their director, co-stars, and everybody else involved in their productions.

Abuse

Producers took all of the abuse as long as the spoiled action stars' movies still made money. But, when they ended up as monumental flops, the disappointed producers stopped making action films, and the erstwhile action superstars were left twiddling their thumbs, and contemplating the navels staring balefully at them from their now plump midsections.

After refusing to face reality for months or even years, the now jobless action stars began resurfacing on TV—as sitcom comedians!

What a fall from macho grace that was, but there were expensive lifestyles to be maintained, so the attendant loss of face was not too unbearable for the "inaction" stars to take.

Will the local action film ever stage a comeback? Yes, but probably with younger stars, because the erstwhile superstars have gone to pot during their long period of inactivity.

Format

Of course, there's also the "action telenovela" format on TV that has kept some action stars fairly busy. But, that's recently been supplanted by more "fantasy"-oriented series, so its future isn't exactly gung-ho.

What *are* our senior action superstars to do? Some of them have opted to translate their cinematic popularity into political clout, and have run for public office, with varying degrees of success.

But, the next elections are years away, unless the playful imps of political change get it into their pointy heads to intervene again.

So, how will this action scenario play itself out? Not with a kiss-kiss, bang-bang, but with a flatulent burp and simper.

RICKETTS. His latest film, "Uno," opens this month.

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He's in the No. 1 spot on Pollstar's Top 25 tours chart for 2004, grossing $87.4 million.

His 69-city/96-show tour was "by far the biggest tour he has ever done," Gary Bongiovanni, editor in chief of Pollstar, the concert industry trade publication, told The Associated Press. "It's a renaissance for him."

Celine Dion, who's been appearing at Caesar's Palace in Las Vegas for a long string of shows, was in second place, coming in at $80.4 million, followed by Madonna, $79.5 million ; Metallica, $60.5 million ; and Bette Midler, $59.4 million.

PRINCE/ A3-3

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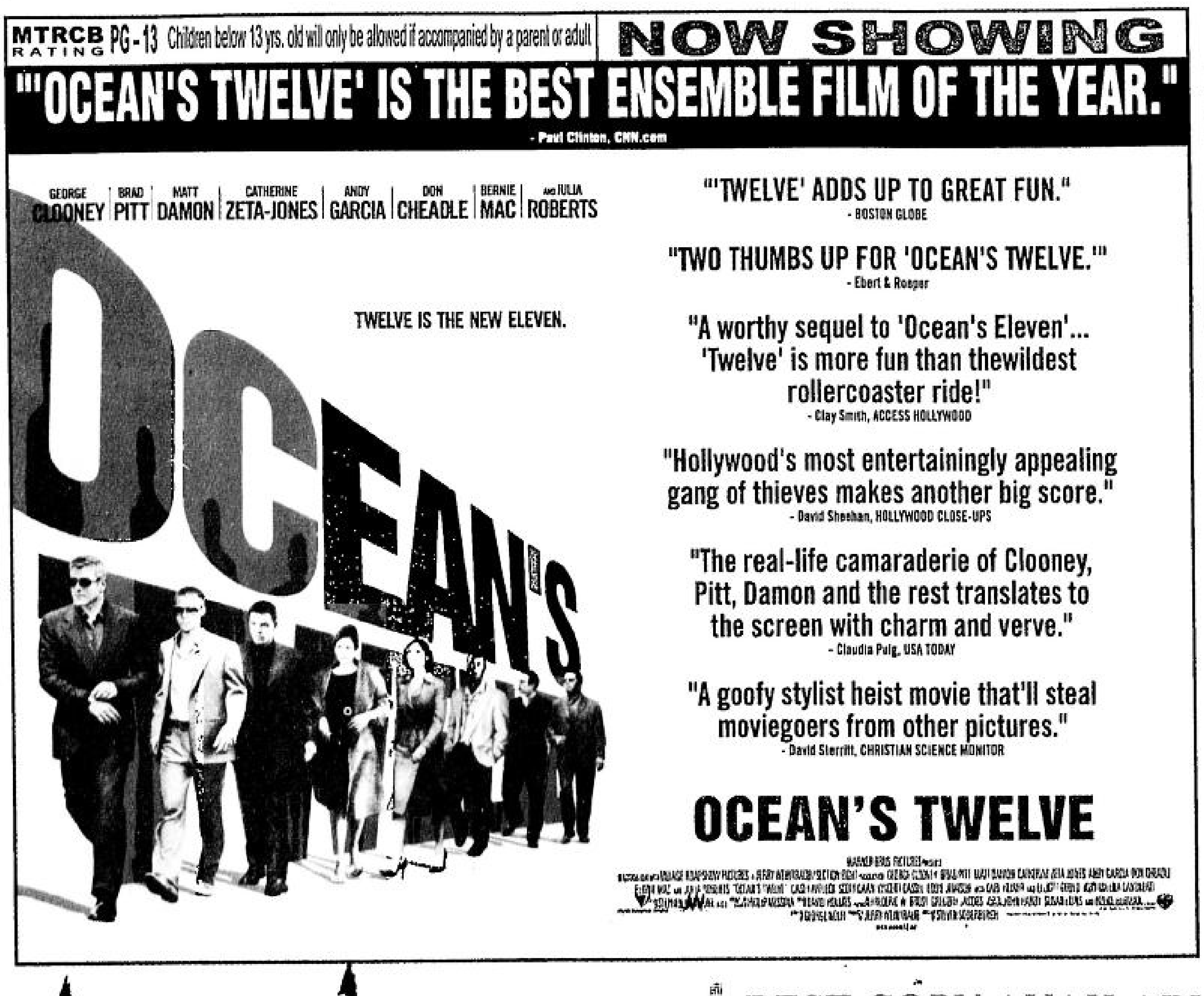
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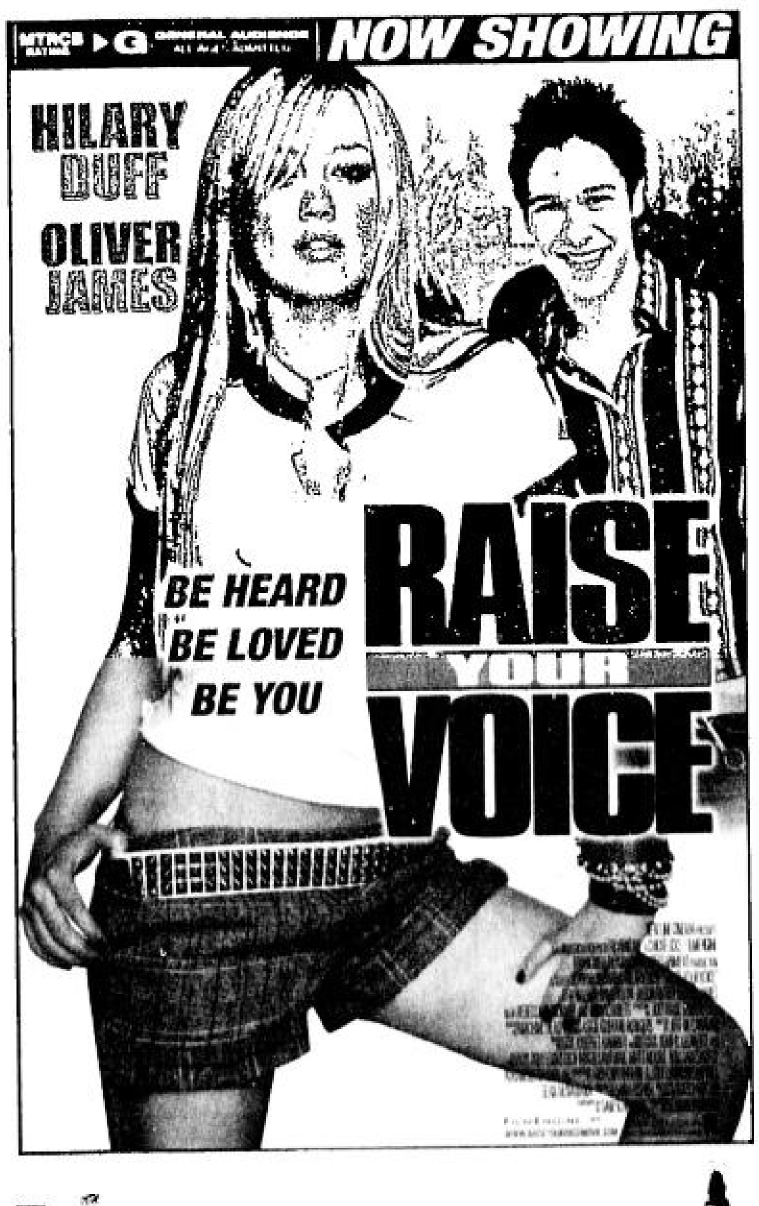
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SATURDAY Special

Thomas Haden Church takes flight in 'Sideways'

CHURCH. Most famous for his work on older TV shows.

NEW YORK—In "Sideways," Jack, an out-of-work actor, explains to his friend: "There are things I have to do that you don't understand. You understand wine, literature and movies, but you don't understand my plight."

The "plight" of Jack, played by Thomas Haden Church, is a prenuptial romp during a wine-tasting trip before his fateful wedding. But, the story of Church's journey is not entirely different from Jack's.

Like the character he plays, Church is most famous for his work on older TV shows. He's probably most recognized as the guy who played Lowell, the deadpan mechanic in the NBC sitcom, "Wings" (1990-97), before leaving to co-star opposite Debra Messing in the Fox series, "Ned and Stacey" (1995-97).

Riotous presence

But, with "Wings" long behind him, Church is finally taking flight.

In Variety, Todd McCarthy wrote of Church: "Whoever expected the co-star of TV's 'Wings' and 'Ned and Stacey' to suddenly emerge as a riotous presence in a top indie-flavored picture?"

Nominated for a Golden Globe, Church has already been honored by the Los Angeles Film Critics Association for best supporting actor, and appears a lock for an Academy Award nomination.

Praise for "Sideways" and its cast—Paul Giamatti, Virginia Madsen and Sandra Oh (director Alexander Payne's wife)—is just as loud. The film ranked in more than 50 critics' top 10 list (including both Associated Press movie reviewers). USA Today recently computed that based on the early season awards, "Sideways" is the odds-on favorite to win the best picture Oscar.

While terms like "surprise" and "unlikely" get tossed around about the film and its stars, even Church was surprised.

He says he chose to do other things after the two TV series "because I had made enough money to be secure. In some way, I was moving away from acting. By circumstance, you just kind of wave goodbye."

Fitting occupation

A Texas native, Church started out as a radio disc jockey and voice-over announcer, a fitting occupation given his deep, animated voice. If pressed, he can still mock-announce the taglines of a few old radio stations.

After catching the acting bug in an independent movie, Church moved to Los Angeles. In 1990, he was cast in "Wings."

Along with "Ned and Stacey," the actor co-starred in the two "George of the Jungle" movies, which he did to make flicks for the kids, and "for a chunk of change."

Less memorable

While mixing in less memorable appearances in films, Church wrote and directed his first movie, "Rolling Kansas," a comedy about a road trip in search of a marijuana forest. Made independently, it played at the 2003 Sundance Film Festival, but was not picked up for theatrical distribution.

For the last few years, the 43-year-old actor has spent less time in Hollywood, living with his wife and children on their Texas cattle ranch.

Enter Payne. The director had been im-

THOMAS/ A4-2

Emmy Rossum earns rave reviews for 'Phantom of the Opera'

ROSSUM. Plays Christine in film adaptation of Andrew Lloyd Webber's musical.

LOS ANGELES—Golden Globe nominee Emmy Rossum picked the opera house over the classroom and hasn't looked back.

At 12, she had to choose between spending less time at New York's Metropolitan Opera, where she had been singing in the children's chorus, and severing ties at the upscale, all-girl Spence School. Her decision appears to have paid off.

Rossum, 18, has been receiving rave reviews for her work in the film version of Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Phantom of the Opera."

Rossum portrays Christine, a young soprano at the Paris Opera who gets caught up in the teaching and music of the mysterious phantom. The National Board of Review declared her portrayal the best breakthrough performance by an actress this year.

Critics' choice

The Broadcast Film Critics Association also gave her a critics' choice award, and she'll be in the running next month for a Golden Globe for best actress in a musical or comedy.

"I'm heavy on preparation," Rossum recently told the Los Angeles Times. "Some actors come to the set and don't know what scene they're playing, but that would make me crazy. It's not about control but perfectionism—my biggest vice, and one of my biggest assets."

Rossum previously starred in the critically acclaimed "Mystic River" and the global-warming disaster film, "The Day After Tomorrow." *AP*

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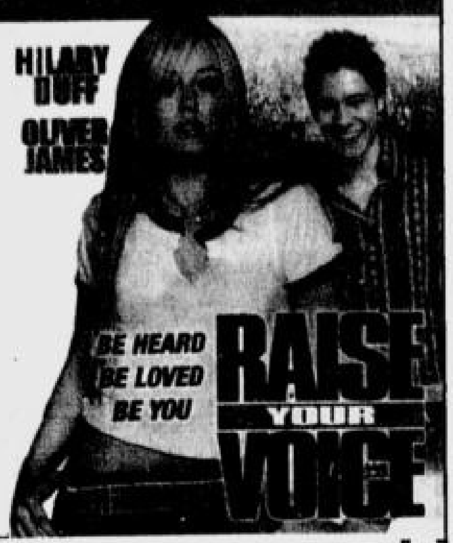

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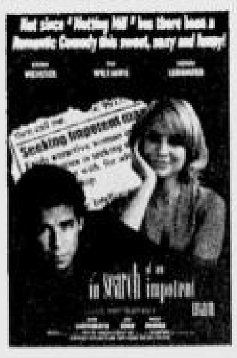
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Affecting emotional breakthrough in Paul Feig's 'I Am David'

By Christy Lemire

NEW YORK—"I Am David" is an unusual children's film that's for older kids but can tug at the hearts of adults, too.

No Happy Meal toy tie-ins, no smug pop-culture references. Just the story of a resourceful 12-year-old boy named David (Ben Tibber), who escapes a post-World War II labor camp (with extraordinary help, by the way, from a fellow prisoner played by Jim Caviezel), travels across Europe and, in the process, finds out who he really is.

There are probably too many coincidences, and the fact that David magically understands the language in each new country he enters is sort of implausible.

Stoic boy

But this stoic boy's emotional breakthrough by the end is surprisingly affecting, thanks to some lovely supporting work from Joan Plowright as the woman who befriends him and helps him reach his final destination.

This probably isn't the kind of movie you'd expect from Paul Feig, who created the acclaimed (though short-lived) TV series, "Freaks and Geeks," and has directed episodes of "Undeclared" and "Arrested Development."

It's probably best to let him explain his involvement as director and writer (he adapted Anne Holm's novel of the same name): "I'm drawn to stories about outsiders," Feig says in the film's production notes.

Little memory

That's definitely what David is. The wide-eyed, closed-mouthed boy has little memory of his parents and, having spent nearly all his young life in an Eastern European labor camp, finds once he reaches the outside world that he doesn't understand currency or know how to use a knife and fork.

PLOWRIGHT. Helps lead child character reach his final destination.

Following a breathless escape sequence—one that suggests a much more fast-paced film than "I Am David" becomes—David finds a knapsack of items waiting for him in the woods along with some paperwork that he isn't supposed to open (though the average person would allow curiosity to take over, but whatever).

In a voiceover, a man whose identity we don't learn until later instructs him to make his way to Italy, then "once you arrive in Italy, travel north until you reach Denmark."

You're thinking, no problem! And you'd be right, but David manages to cover a great deal of ground through the kindness of strangers. (Come on, people—it's a kid's movie! Show some heart.)

While "I Am David" may sound like a depressing prospect, it's filled with small moments of wonder, such as David's ride on the back of a scooter, the sun on his face and the wind in his hair.

Best meal

Through an unbelievable series of events, he also spends a luxurious afternoon with a wealthy Italian family, has the best meal of his life and makes his first friend, a beautiful little girl named Maria (Viola Carinci).

The person who has the biggest influence on him, though, is Sophie (Plowright), an artist who helps him enter Switzerland and gives him a place to stay for the night. Slowly, this gentle woman draws out his real story (until this point, he's lied to every other grown-up he's met out of fear) and divulges that she had a son about his age.

Revelatory twist

Once Sophie's calico cat crawls into David's lap and begins purring in his arms, the boy abandons his defenses completely, and you may find that you do, as well. The moment is quietly touching.

The revelatory twist at the end is a bit of a stretch, but "I Am David" generates such good will during its journey, that's forgivable.

AP

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Thomas

From page A4-1

pressed by Church in auditions for his last two films: "Election" and "About Schmidt." He was close for the part in "Schmidt," but lost out to Dermot Mulroney in the role of Kathy Bates' brother.

For the character of Jack in "Sideways," Payne thought about casting a big-name actor, but didn't think the audience would buy a movie star playing a C-lister.

Commercials

"He says in the movie: 'I used to be in a couple of TV series, I write right now, I do mostly commercials,'" says Payne. "That's kind of what Tom has been doing recently. Yes, he directed a movie, 'Rolling Kansas' and also did "George of the Jungle," but his big things have been those TV series. I think about it every time I see that scene."

So, will "Sideways" propel Church back into acting full time?

No problem

"I've been offered several movies since the film opened at the Toronto Film Festival, but I didn't want to do any of them. If this is the last movie that I would ever do, that would be all right. I have no problem with 'Sideways' as the movie I become known for."

Meantime, he makes a cameo in another movie, "Spanglish."

The parallels between Church and Jack only go so far, though. And Church certainly doesn't buy Jack's "plight," or that his womanizing will end when a ring is on his finger: "No leopard changes his spots in his early 40s," he intones.

AP

Elvis Presley scores 19th UK No. 1 with 'Jailhouse Rock'

LONDON—Elvis Presley is No. 1 again in Britain 27 years after his death with his iconic hit, "Jailhouse Rock," the Official UK Charts Company said recently.

The rock and roll standard, a UK chart-topper in 1958, was reissued to coincide with the 70th anniversary of Presley's birth and is his 19th UK No. 1.

The number was written by songwriting duo Jerry Lieber and Mike Stoller, who composed the Presley hit, "Hound Dog" and many other pop classics.

Title song

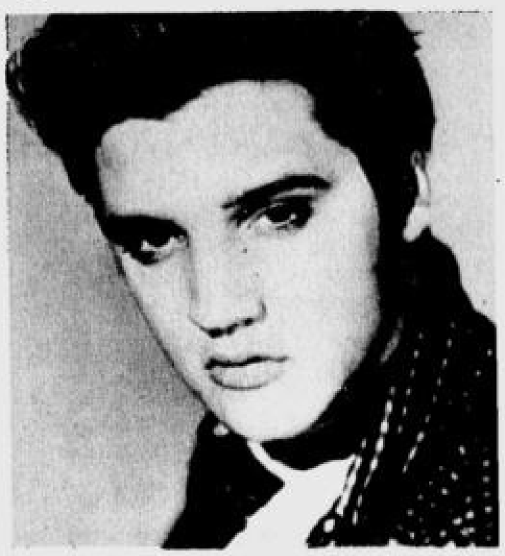
It was the title song of Presley's third film, "Jailhouse Rock," in which he played an ex-convict who becomes a teenage rock star.

Among the week's five other new entries, "The Number of the Beast," from British heavy metal band Iron Maiden, hit the charts at No. 3.

Another anniversary reissue, the 1982 rock anthem was released to mark 25 years since Iron Maiden's formation.

British pop duo Erasure returned to the charts at No. 4 with "Breathe" from their upcoming album, "Nightbird," while flamboyant American act Scissor Sisters entered at No. 5 with "Filthy/Gorgeous."

The other new entries were New York singer Dana Rayne's "Object of My Desire" at No. 7, and "Cutt off" by British indie band Kasabian at No. 8. Reuters



PRESLEY. Latest charttopper was reissued to coincide with his 70th birth anniversary.

Arab actors . . . .

From page A4-4

Centerstage at the festival was taken by films about the Arab world but made outside the region, usually by non-Arabs.

Leading Egyptian actor Hussein Fahmy said the ailing Arab cinema industry had become incapable of promoting its own self-image to the rest of the world.

"Eventually, all we'll have left is American and Indian cinema because they have the power to distribute films in their theaters. Producers see big returns," he said, adding that in the Arab world, "we're all losing money in movies."

Priority list

Hollywood actors who made the journey to the glitzy Gulf city of Dubai said the Arab world was still low down on Hollywood's priority list for re-evaluation.

"Middle East filmmakers are not the only people that have a problem getting their films across," "The Grudge" star Sarah Michelle Gellar told reporters.

"To this day, a woman cannot open an action movie like Tom Cruise can, or a comedy movie like Jim Carrey can." But, "T for Terrorism" director Hesham Issawi saw hope in Hollywood: "They don't hate Arabs, that's not true, really. They don't know us, so it's more about ignorance than hate." *Reuters*

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3 IN SEARCH OF THE IMPOTENT MAN 10:45 1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
4 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:20 2:00 4:40 7:20 10:00
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:20 12:40 3:00 5:20 7:40 10:00
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 10:30 1:15 4:00 6:45 9:30
7 PANAGHOY SA SUBA 11:40 2:15 4:50 7:25 10:00
8 MANO PO 3 12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
9 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 11:10 1:20 3:30 5:40 7:50 10:00
10 SIGAW 11:40 2:10 4:40 7:10 9:40

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2 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
3 OCEAN'S TWELVE 11:10 1:50 4:30 7:10 9:50
4 RAISE YOUR VOICE 10:10 12:30 2:50 5:10 7:30 9:50
5 IN SEARCH OF AN IMPOTENT MAN 10:35 12:50 3:05 5:20 7:35 9:50
6 RESERVE
7 KUNG FU HUSTLE 10:30 12:45 3:00 5:15 7:30 9:45

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2 NATIONAL TREASURE 11:00 2:30 4:00 6:30 9:00
3 SO...HAPPY TOGETHER 12:05 2:15 4:25 6:40 9:00
4 SIGAW 11:00 1:05 3:10 5:15 7:20 9:30
5 KUNG FU HUSTLE 12:30 3:00 5:30 8:00 10:30
6 OCEAN'S TWELVE 12:05 2:45 5:25 8:05
7 RAISE YOUR VOICE 11:50 2:30 5:10 7:50 10:30
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4 SALAT SA LIGAYA 11:20 1:10 3:00 4:50 6:40 8:30

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2 ENTENG KABISOTE 11:00 1:20 3:40 6:00 8:20
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Hilary Swank triumphs in 'Million Dollar Baby'

SWANK. Portrays boxer Maggie Fitzgerald in latest film.

SAN FRANCISCO—After her Oscar-winning performance in "Boys Don't Cry," Hilary Swank thought the world was her oyster. She remembers thinking, "'I'm going to have so many amazing opportunities; this movie is just scratching the surface!'"

Since then, Swank has appeared in "The Affair of the Necklace," "Insomnia," "The Spaces Between," "The Core" and the HBO drama, "Iron Jawed Angels." None was as well received as "Boys Don't Cry."

Role

Now, she is again earning critical raves for her role as boxer Maggie Fitzgerald in "Million Dollar Baby," directed by and co-starring Clint Eastwood.

"Not to put down any of these other movies I've done since 'Boys Don't Cry,' but they weren't as meaty," Swank told the San Francisco Chronicle. "I feel lucky to have found two amazing roles before I hit 30."

Eastwood didn't see any other actresses for the role. "I was a fan of Hilary's from 'Boys Don't Cry,' and I saw her in 'Insomnia,' where she was good, but she didn't have a very deep part," Eastwood said. *AP*

Malkovich plays painter in biopic

MALKOVICH. Portrays Austrian modernist Gustav Klimt.

VIENNA, Austria—Shooting for a movie featuring John Malkovich as Austrian art noveau painter Gustav Klimt began recently in Vienna, a publicity company said.

The movie, "Klimt," depicts the life of the famous painter, whose masterpieces include the painting "The Kiss."

The movie's screenwriter and director, Raoul Ruiz, chose a dispute about paintings commissioned by the state as a central theme.

Platonic friendship

The film focuses on Klimt's struggle for artistic freedom, and on his personal relationships, including his lifelong, platonic friendship with Emilie Floege, played by Veronica Ferres.

Saffron Burrows, Nikolai Kinski and Paul Hilton are among other actors to play roles in the film, which is expected to open in May.

Klimt, who was born in 1862 and died in 1918, was one of the founders of Vienna's modernist Secession movement. During his lifetime, he was considered controversial at home, while the art scene in Paris praised his works. AP

Cinemalaya filmfest unfolds in July

By Nestor U. Torre

THE COUNTRY'S film community and movie buffs are excited about the Cinemalaya Alternative Filipino Film Festival, which will be staged for the first time in July at the Cultural Center of the Philippines by the Film Development Council, the CCP and the UP Film Institute.

The festival isn't as big as the Metro Manila Film Festival in terms of budget and box-office appeal, but it's deemed to be an important event because it showcases alternative movies, and gives a chance to some 20 new filmmakers in both the long and short narrative modes to get their break.

Long slump

The Cinemalaya filmfest is made even more important by the long slump that Filipino movies are currently experiencing. One way to boost the production of local films *and* to boost viewers' interest in them is to encourage alternative movies by new filmmakers.

If it's successful, Cinemalaya could go a long way in this regard, so people who want local movies to improve and flourish are hoping that the filmfest's first edition will turn out well.

What *are* the prospects of this happening? Since we helped conceptualize the full-length and short narrative (20-minute) competitions, and judged both of them, we are in a position to provide these updates on the festival, which was originally set to open in February:

GARCIA. Lends stellar support to indie film and filmfest finalist, "ICU Bed #7."

In the short narrative tilt, some 37 entries were viewed by the board of judges, and six were selected for screening and competition.

In the full-length tilt, 10 finalists by first-time feature filmmakers were given production grants, and are currently in various stages of production.

At first, there were apprehensions that the finalist writers and directors, being first-timers in the 90-minute mode, would have a hard time completing their digital productions.

Well, there have been many difficulties, but most of the finalist teams have managed to get their acts together, so most if not all of the 10 finalist productions should be up for viewing when Cinemalaya opens in July.

This is very good news, because this would mean that local film buffs would be able to appreciate the talents of some 10 first-time feature filmmakers—a bonanza of new film prospects for the languishing Filipino movie industry and its audience.

If only half of the finalists turn out to be worthy productions, this would be a big boost for our film fortunes, because it's most unusual that five new feature-filmmaking talents get discovered on any movie year.

Short narrative

As for the six short narrative movies that made it to the finals in their separate category, some of them are small gems, so they are also expected to make an impact all their own.

So, all in all, Cinemalaya looks promising. What we now need to do is to support it by making it a point to view all of its long and short digital films at the CCP, and to patronize its other events.

There's a lot riding on this, so we trust that you will join us in making sure that the Cinemalaya festival succeeds, so it will become an annual event.

Arab actors hope for change in Hollywood stereotypes

DUBAI—Sayed Badreya doesn't act very well, but then he never really had to—Hollywood has only ever wanted him to look crazy like a terrorist.

Now, the Egyptian actor who played the bad guy in films like "The Insider," "Three Kings" and "Executive Decision" has got his own back with the comic drama "T for Terrorist."

Lunatic

Badreya plays a bit-part actor who looses his temper at a director's demands for more and more wild-eyed looks in a "terrorism scene." So, he holds up the set at gunpoint and forces the pasty-faced director to play the gun-toting lunatic.

But, it turns out to be a dream, and the short film ends as a resigned Badreya resumes work with: "On your knees, you stinking Americans! In the name of Allah, I will kill you all!"

The $30,000 film, which has toured the US festival circuit over the past year, was shown this weekend at the Dubai International Film Festival as part of movies focusing on East-West relations.

Badreya, a large man with bulging eyes and a beard, saw the film as evidence that Hollywood was beginning to question the stereotypes of Arabs it often projects.

"There is a movement in Hollywood to allow us to tell our own story, because there is no Arabic story on the screen," he told a seminar, adding that the actors, including well-known Arab-American Tony Shalhoub, had taken part in the production for free.

Ill-feeling

"There is no Arabic story on the screen. The Americans and Europeans tell our story, and if Americans and Europeans tell our story, it's not going to come up smelling of falafel."

Arabs and Muslims have complained of ill-feeling toward them in the United States after the Sept. 11 attacks in 2001. Anti-US sentiment is strong in the region because of the Iraq war and perceived US support for Israel against the Palestinians.

ARAB/ A4-3

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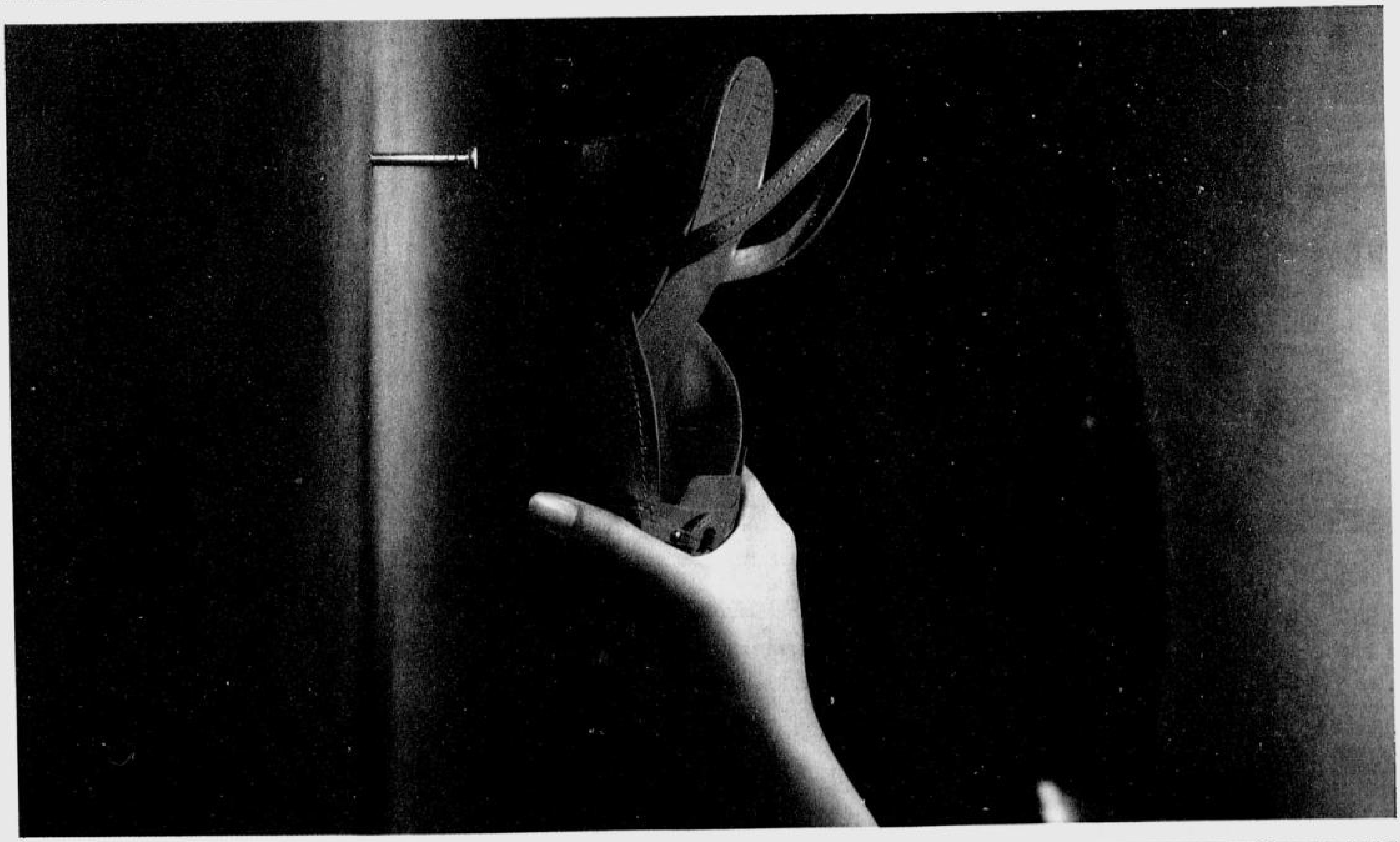

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NOW SHOWING

Duff, Chow in films about realizing one's true potential

By Rito P. Asilo

"Raise Your Voice"

D: Sean McNamara
S: Hilary Duff, Oliver James

THE TRAGIC death of her brother Paul (Jason Ritter) zaps out talented high school student Terri Fletcher's (Hilary Duff) *joie de vivre* and her drive to pursue a life beyond the confines of a small town in Arizona. The letter of acceptance to a prestigious summer music program in Los Angeles' top performing arts school even finds itself in the trash bin!

It's a good thing her supportive mom, Frances (Rita Wilson), and feisty Aunt Nina (Rebecca de Mornay) know a thing or two about garbage recycling, otherwise Terri would have suffered the unfortunate fate of rotting "blissfully uncorrupted" as a waitress in her stoic dad's (David Keith) restaurant business—as if living an idyllic rural existence were one of the Seven Deadly Sins.

So, the promising but grief-stricken adolescent is snuck out of town to pursue a dream her departed brother helped realize (he sent the music school a "she's really cool, give her a chance" DVD). But, who says that life in the big city is a walk in the park?

Yes, the obligatory handsome dreamboat, Jay (Oliver James)—with a British accent to boot—keeps our beleaguered heroine smiling a lot, but the harsh realities (Jay's beautiful and talented but mean ex-girlfriend; an emotionally distant roommate; kooky but kind-hearted mentors, etc.) of this alternative world keep her from reaching her true potential.

Duff's latest teenage potboiler (originally intended as a Christian coming-of-age starrer for gospel singer Jaci Velasquez) comes off as an implausible, quick-fix romantic drama, but it will please Hilary's throng of pubescent followers.

The film's by-the-numbers predictability is occasionally lifted beyond saccharine schmaltz through innovative camerawork, inventive cuts in editing, a pop-heavy soundtrack, amusingly quirky characters, and fine performances from Duff, Wilson and De Mornay, who are required to deliver corny, self-help mantras like "You make your own luck" or "Artists have to convey emotions that make their audience feel what they're feeling—from the mind to the heart!" Sniff.

"Kung Fu Hustle"

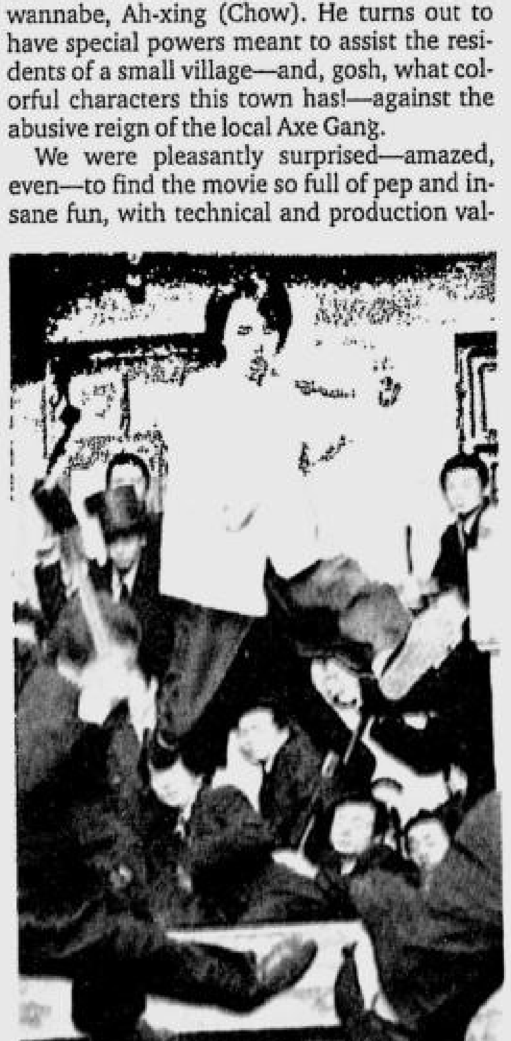
D: Stephen Chow
S: Stephen Chow

If you are an action-comedy aficionado, don't miss Stephen Chow's rousing, rip-roaring visual spectacle, which can give Hollywood's special-effects productions a run for their money.

Set in Canton, China in the 1940s, this deliciously slapstick-silly Toronto filmfest entry—Chow's ("Shaolin Soccer") sixth directorial effort—tells the story of a gangster wannabe, Ah-xing (Chow). He turns out to have special powers meant to assist the residents of a small village—and, gosh, what colorful characters this town has!—against the abusive reign of the local Axe Gang.

We were pleasantly surprised—amazed, even—to find the movie so full of pep and insane fun, with technical and production values that bristle with local color, gravity-defying action sequences choreographed at lightning speed, zany visual gags, and a robust serving of giddy irreverence.

It takes sometime for Ah-xing to realize his superhuman potential, and for him to choose between good and evil, but the movie doesn't drag because Chow fills his screen with flawed but likable, colorful characters: from the cranky, cigar-chomping landlady and her seemingly subservient husband to the hilarious, not-so-beautiful village beauty, and from the sullen-faced local barber to the gay kung fu master. A gas!


CHOW. His latest film is a rousing, rip-roaring visual spectacle.

DUFF WITH RITTER (AT LOWER RIGHT). Play siblings in Sean McNamara's romantic drama.

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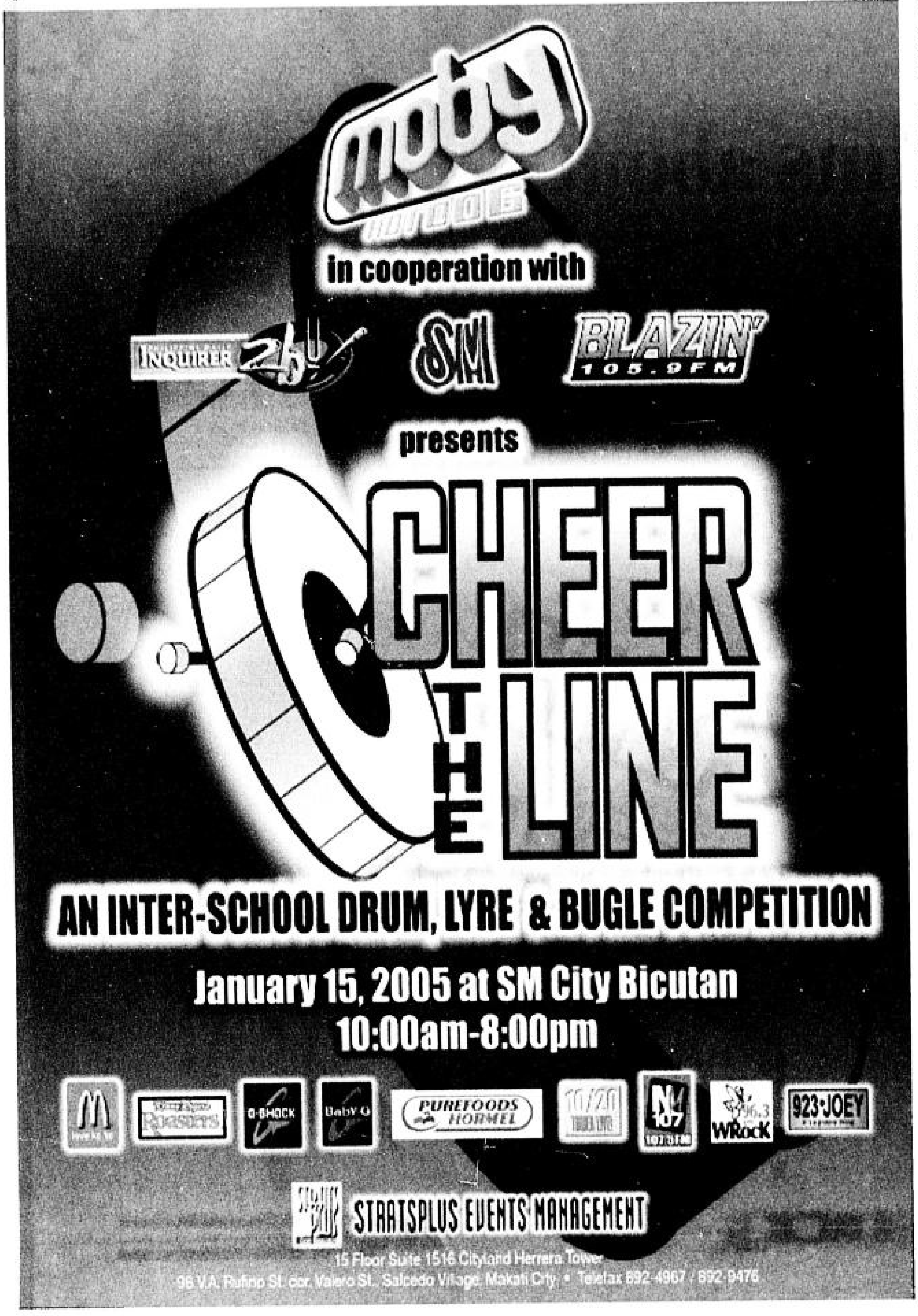
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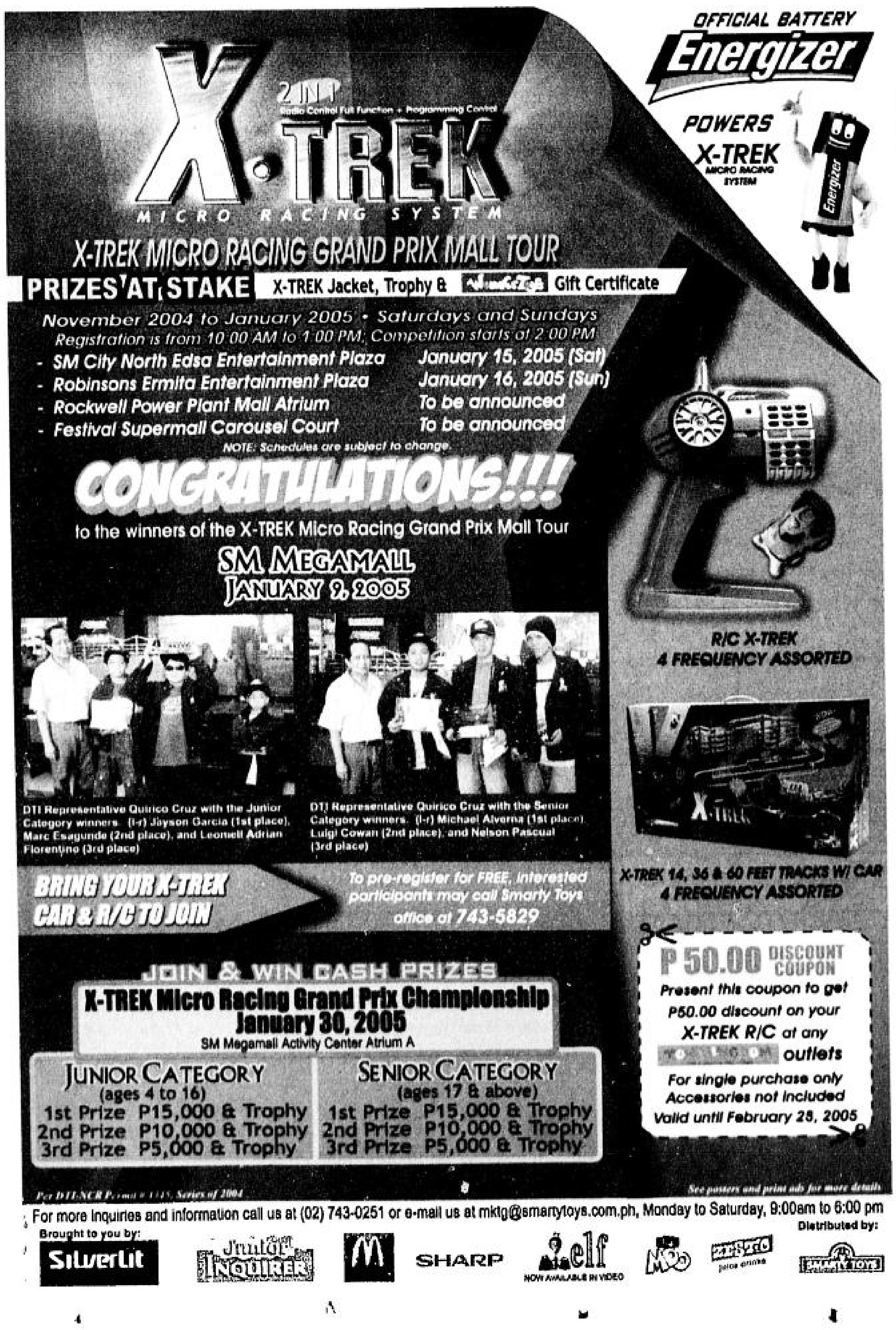
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NEW YORK—An all-star cast of Broadway luminaries recently sang, danced and shared memories of composer Cy Coleman, who died last November at 75.

"He was not only the best of Broadway and the best of musical theater, he was the best of New York," said playwright Wendy Wasserstein, who was collaborating with Coleman on a show based on her children's book, "Pamela's First Musical," when he died.

The tribute to Coleman at the Majestic Theater was organized by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers and included performances of more than a dozen songs from his long career.

Slinky chorus line

Chita Rivera, Ann Reinking and a slinky chorus line opened the show with "Big Spender" from "Sweet Charity," the 1966 musical that will be returning to Broadway in April.

Lucie Arnaz and her daughter, Katharine Luckinbill, sang "Hey, Look Me Over" from "Wildcat," which starred Arnaz's mother, Lucille Ball.

Lillias White brought down the house with "The Oldest Profession" from "The Life," the 1997 show about the Times Square sex trade.

Brian Stokes Mitchell, subbing for a laryngitis-stricken Tony Bennett, performed "The Best Is Yet to Come."

Coleman died Nov. 18 of heart failure after attending the opening-night performance of Michael Frayn's "Democracy."

SIMON. Wanted to mount a stage version of the Marlene Dietrich starrer, "Morocco." AP

An accomplished jazz pianist, he received three Tony Awards for best score. His pop songs, which also included "Firefly," "Witchcraft" and "I'm Gonna Laugh You Right Out of My Life," were recorded by singers such as Bennett, Peggy Lee and Nat "King" Cole.

Musical

Neil Simon, who worked with Coleman on "Little Me" and "Sweet Charity," said the two were planning to write a musical based on the Marlene Dietrich movie, "Morocco."

"It's never going to happen now, but it was fun talking about it," Simon said. "I miss you, Cy, and why did I think you would always be around?—Because I wanted it to be that way!"

AP

CHITA Rivera, center right, and Ann Reinking, fourth from left, perform "Big Spender" from the musical "Sweet Charity," at a tribute for the legendary composer. AP

AXN sneak peek

MONTAGE

AXN presents these new action and adventure shows this year: "The Contender": This reality show offers 16 aspiring boxers a chance to become professional prizefighters, and to win a cool million dollars in the process. Supervising them on their road to fame and fortune is none other than Sylvester Stallone, whose iconic film character, Rocky, has become a symbol of the American dream.

"Lost": Forty-eight survivors fight to stay alive on a tropical island with a malicious mind of its own after their plane mysteriously tears apart over it. The series has consistently topped network viewership in its primetime hour in the US.

"CSI: Crime Scene Investigation": The 100th episode of "CSI" takes its investigative team into the complex world of sex changes to solve a murder. It currently stands as the most-watched broadcast ever on US network television.

"Fear factor" (Season 5): The popular reality challenge show (hosted by Joe Rogan) returns on its fifth season with the most fear-inducing dares. Every week, contestants vie for $50,000 in prize money.

ROGAN. Host of popular reality challenge show, "Fear Factor."

'MTV Superstars' CD

A free "MTV Superstars" CD will be given to all MTV Credit, Debit and Prepaid cardholders. All they need to do is to present their sales invoices amounting to P5,000 from a single or accumulated purchase (from transactions made from Oct. 7, 2004 to Feb. 28, 2005), together with their card at accredited Equitable Card offices.

Only active MTV accounts are qualified, and cardholders have until May 31 to claim this exclusive freebie. The CD is exclusively released by Sony Music Philippines and MTV Credit Card by Equitable Card. Artists featured include Beyoncé, Britney Spears, Hilary Duff, Justin Timberlake and Black Eyed Peas.

"INTERPOL INVESTIGATES." National Geographic Channel's series pursues some of the world's most cunning fugitives.

'Ocean's Twelve,' 'Kung Fu Hustle' top box office

From Jan. 6 to 9, "Ocean's Twelve" was the top grosser at the box office, pocketing a hefty P16.8 million opening weekend gross on 63 screens in Metro Manila. Nationwide, the film grossed P20.34 million.

For its part, "Kung Fu Hustle," the special effects-packed action-comedy starring Stephen Chow, ended up in second place, with a P14.70 million opening weekend gross in Metro Manila alone. This is the all-time biggest opening for a Chinese-language movie, besting 2003's "Hero" (starring Jet Li) at P12.29 million.

'White Noise'

Michael Keaton's new starrer, "White Noise," set a new box-office record in North America for the highest-grossing debut for a film opening on the first weekend of the new year. The film made $24 million, well above the P16.6 million earned by the previous record holder, "A Beautiful Mind," in 2002.

In the film, Keaton plays an architect who becomes obsessed with getting in touch with his dead wife through the Electronic Voice Phenomenon. This is the process by which the dead communicate with the living through the static or "white" noise of modern electronic devices.

New NGC show

Starting Jan. 16 (Sunday) at 10 p.m., this National Geographic Channel series pursues some of the world's most cunning fugitives. Shot around the globe, each hour-long episode re-creates actual criminal investigations with vivid dramatizations, archival footage, cultural context and first-hand accounts from investigators or victims' families.

AXN/ A5-3

Comprehensive exploration on 'Eyewitness'

By Noelani Torre

SCIENTIFIC documentary programs come in all shapes and sizes nowadays, from the huge and cinematic to the small and charming. One of the best we've seen is this intriguing little show called "Eyewitness," which airs regularly on the Knowledge Channel.

Insightful and quirky, the series features a disparate number of topics (such as aviation, potatoes and bears), giving us not only their scientific history, but their social and cultural roots as well.

There's a narrator, but no visible host. And, the script is witty and perceptive. The visuals are the real stars here, however. The clips and images are first-rate, and they quite literally "come to life."

This is because the show's format is that of some sort of white-walled virtual gallery with the camera as the tour guide. A flower in bloom or a snail slowly sliding becomes something spectacular when imposed against the great expanse of white.

Episode

The most recent episode we were able to watch was "Eyewitness: Bears." Not limiting the feature to real-life bears, it touched on the teddy bear, Winnie the Pooh, bears in world mythology and folk tales, and so on.

This comprehensive exploration allowed us to ponder the human being's long relationship with these complicated creatures, and gave us a glimpse of their view of the world.

Humans have had links with bears since prehistoric times—they were competition in food foraging, and they do look eerily like us, especially when they're standing on their hind legs or picking berries.

Interestingly enough, the bear's closest cousin is man's best friend, the dog. When you look at some of the bear's characteristics—like its appetite—you'll see the family resemblance immediately!

The show doesn't ignore today's real bears, either. It features the eight species of bears extant in the world today, from the panda, the Malaysian sun bear and the huge, white polar bear. They differ in sizes, colors and choices of food, but they all look adorable—an image dispelled by shots of their terrifying-looking claws and their enthusiastic (and messy) consumption of salmon.

Harmless

We are also warned against thinking of real bears as harmless teddies or Winnie the Poohs. When a bear helps himself to your food, drawls the narrator, don't stop to argue with him about it—just get as far away as you can!

All in all, it was an enjoyable and illuminating hour of television, which is something we can say of all the episodes on "Eyewitness" we've seen thus far. The show captures the interest of audiences from practically all age groups, as evinced by the reaction of our fellow viewers the last time we caught the show:

The kids were riveted, and they'd been clamoring for their favorite animé show just minutes before our program began. Who says education can't be fun?

SCIENTIFIC show on the Knowledge Channel is quirky and insightful.

AXN sneak peek

From page A5-2

'The Cradle of Life'

JOLIE. Stars as Lara Croft in "The Cradle of Life."

In "Lara Croft, Tomb Raider: The Cradle of Life," Angelina Jolie reprises her role as the intrepid action heroine.

This time, her adventures take her to exotic places like Hong Kong, Kenya, Tanzania, Greece and China. She stops at nothing in her search for an infamous site known as the Cradle of Life, so she can save the world from unspeakable evil.

"The Cradle of Life" will be screened on HBO at 9 p.m. tonight.

Outstanding retailer

Video City, the country's leading video store chain, was recently honored with the Outstanding Filipino retailer (Services category) Award by the Philippine Retailers Association. Video City is a Viva Entertainment company that offers quality and legitimate titles for sale or for rent.

A few years ago, it notched a milestone in the franchising industry by achieving a 500 percent expansion rate. Currently, there are 200 Video City stores nationwide, and more will open this year.

Movies on TV

On HBO, Jan. 15 at 6 a.m., "That Championship Season." Jan. 16 at 6:30 p.m., "Sinbad: Legend of the Seven Seas." 8 p.m., "Raiders of the Lost Ark." 11:50 p.m., "The Laramie Project." Jan. 17 at 1:45 p.m., "American Me." Jan. 16 at 1:30 p.m., "Live from Baghdad." 5 p.m., "School Ties." Jan. 19 at 6:30 a.m., "Road to Redemption." 9 p.m., "Multiplicity."

On Cinemax, Jan. 15 at 8:15 a.m., "The Fabulous Baker Boys." 9 p.m., "Little Women." Jan. 16 at 6 a.m., "The Man Who Knew Too Much." 9 p.m., "Scent of A Woman." 11:35 p.m., "And the Band Played On." Jan. 17 at 2 p.m., "Guess Who's Coming to Dinner." 9 p.m, "Ghosts of Mississippi." Jan. 18 at 5:30 p.m., "Mrs. Winterbourne." Jan. 19 at 9 p.m., "Changing Lanes."

VIDEO City general manager Joey Singian (center) accepts Outstanding Retailer award from Trade Assistant Secretary J. Norman Hocson and Philippine Retailers Association chairman Manuel M. Siggaoat.

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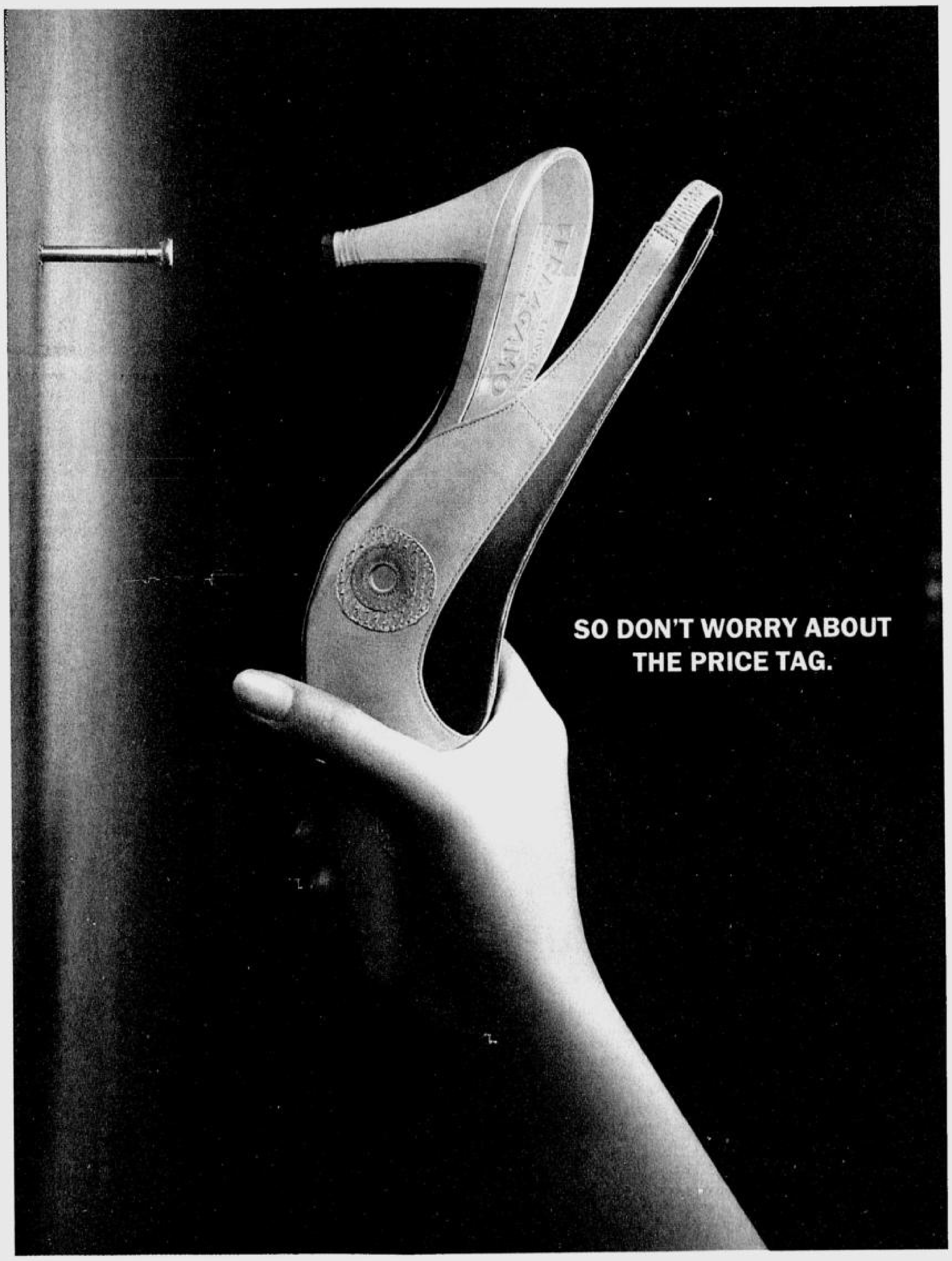

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VISA
All it takes.

In 16th season, 'The Simpsons' is a well-oiled laugh machine

LOS ANGELES—Bart Simpson is acting like himself, which is to say naughty. And he sounds like himself, with that familiar mischievous lilt.

But, Bart's voice is coming out of a petite blonde wearing a fluffy, bright-pink wrap. Dumpy Homer has morphed into a lanky fellow, and mom Marge's towering blue hair is brown and tastefully cropped.

The event was a "table read," when the cast of "The Simpsons" gathered with a roomful of writers, producers and guests, using their imaginations to conjure up the animated family with the distinctive mustard hue.

It was one of the steps toward crafting an episode of the Fox series that began its 16th season recently in the United States with its annual "Treehouse of Horror" special. The run is remarkable for any show.

Spice

Irreverent, witty and willing to take on anything from politics to religion to family values, "The Simpsons" has provided a rare bit of spice for the oatmeal-bland bowl of TV broadcasting.

The table read, held in an oversize trailer at the 20th Century Fox studio, where the series is produced, itself is a symbol of the show's enduring popularity.

A decade ago, it finished the season as the 67th most-watched show; it was No. 69 last season with 10.7 million viewers, and won its time period among the coveted 18 to 49 age group.

Rare stipulation

Actors, producers and writers sit at a massive conference table littered with water bottles and note pads. Invitation-only visitors ring the table. (Noticeably absent are the network executives who always haunt rehearsals; "The Simpsons" has a rare stipulation, won by executive producer James L. Brooks, limiting Fox meddling.)

"It's the hottest ticket on the lot," said Yeardley Smith, who voices young Lisa, the wise Simpson daughter.

"I'll look around and go, 'Hey, there's Elvis Costello,'" said Al Jean, an executive producer who's been with the series since it was spun off in December 1989 from Tracey Ullman's Fox series.

Singer-songwriter Costello, who provided his voice for one episode, popped up at the table read for another.

It's a treat for observers, but serious work for the cast and producers. This is the first time a script has been performed after months of writing and revision.

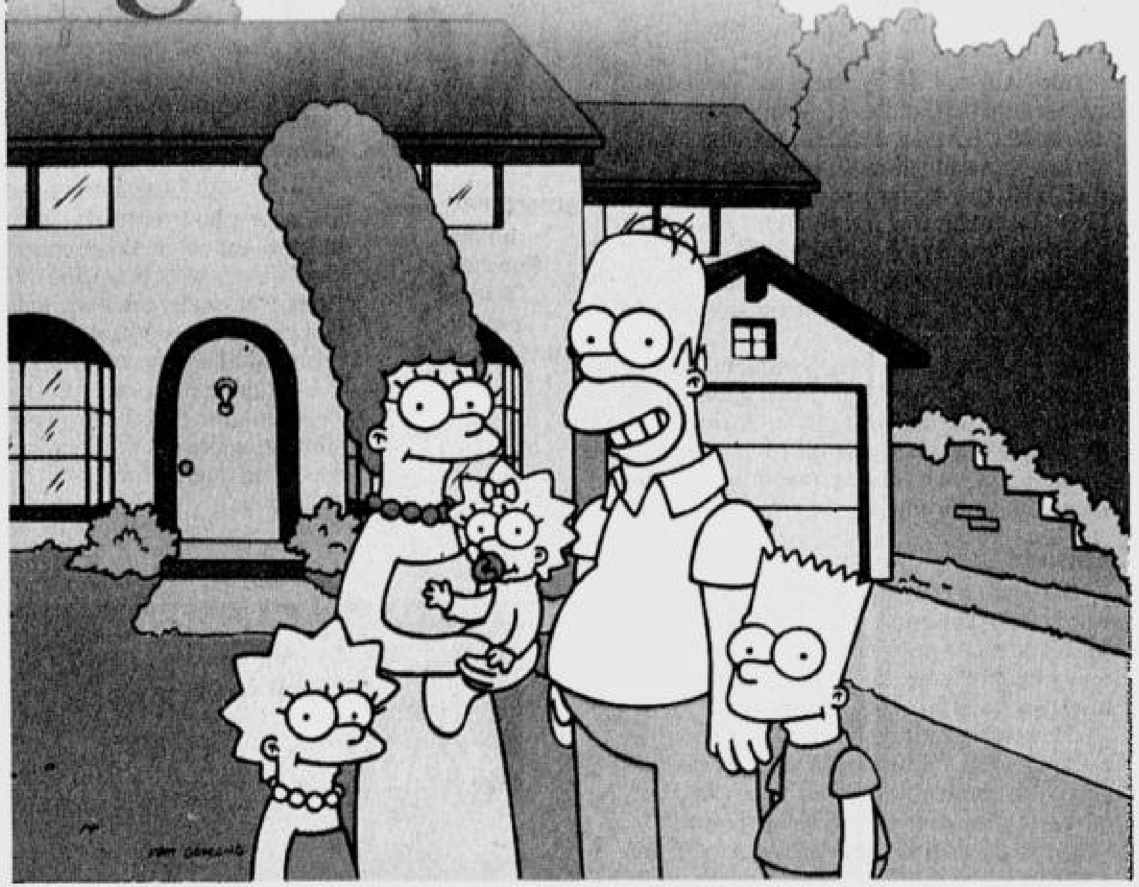
This particular week, it's also the first time the actors have seen the script. Finished at the last minute, it couldn't be provided until the cast arrived at the studio for the rehearsal.

Array of voices

The assembled performers include Smith; Dan Castellaneta, who received his third Emmy last year for voicing Homer and whose other characters include Krusty the clown and Grampa Simpson; Nancy Cartwright as Bart; Julie Kavner as Marge; and Harry Shearer, who does an array of voices (including Ned Flanders and Mr. Burns).

Absent is Hank Azaria, who was in New York. Can the comedy keep its spark? He points to the latest table read as assurance.

"It still rang true and was funny," Jean said. AP



LONG-RUNNING animated series is irreverent, witty and willing to take on anything from politics to religion to family values.

Busy year ahead for Viva Records

By Remy Umerez

LOCAL singing champions put an end last year to the popularity of Asian singers from Taiwan and other neighboring Asian countries.

"Not all of them will succeed," observes Baby Gil, corporate head of the Viva Group of Companies, which explains why the company known for promoting original Filipino music keeps on discovering new talents. She further notes that 2005 will be a great year for local composers.

New stars

Producers will concentrate on creating new stars who can be tomorrow's singing sensations. The emergence of Sarah Geronimo, Rachelle Ann Go, Christian Bautista, Mark Bautista, Erik Santos, Bamboo, Kyle and Jay-R are clear indications of how competitive the market has become.

CANSECO. Commemorative album in his honor will be released next month.

These names now enjoy equal exposure with foreign artists, thanks to effective collaborations between radio stations and record companies. Gil anticipates the return of bands.

Eugene Villaluz, A&R director of Viva Records, reveals that the company's opening salvo for the year is a novelty album from the Viva Hotbabes, "Basketball." Another novelty album scheduled for release is the newest recording from the Viva Hotmen.

A commemorative album on the works of the late George Canceso is due for release in time for a tribute and fund-raising project to be held next month. The music of Canseco has been waxed by many of the major artists in the industry.

Viva will also launch a new album by Nonoy Zuñiga, which will contain timeless love ballads popularized by foreign artists.

Eugene reveals that, as early as today, they are already gathering materials for a Christmas album that they will produce for Sarah Geronimo. He explains, "Completing the lineup takes so much time. We want the album to be released by the end of August."

Company

Completing Viva's offerings, the company will release a new album from Salbakuta and debut recordings from new singers, Agatha and Angel Mae.

Spooky thriller tops UK box office

LONDON—A spooky thriller about the dead communicating with the living through tape and video recorders has opened in the No. 1 spot on the British film charts.

"White Noise," starring Michael Keaton as a successful architect whose wife dies mysteriously, raked in 1.78 million pounds in its first week, Screen International said recently.

Oliver Stone's "Alexander," whose stars Colin Farrell and Angelina Jolie strolled down the red carpet at the film's recent London premiere, debuted at number two, making 1.2 million pounds for Warner Brothers.

Epic

The epic, "Aviator," which features Leonardo DiCaprio as American billionaire Howard Hughes and Cate Blanchett as Katherine Hepburn, leapt an extraordinary 10 places to No. 3, selling 1.16 million pounds worth of tickets.

First Oscar nomination

The film, set between the 1920s and 30s, has been nominated for a raft of Golden Globe awards, and DiCaprio is widely tipped to secure his first Oscar nomination for best actor.

The adventures of the Parr family continue to capture healthy audiences across the UK, with "The Incredibles" in at fourth position after eight weeks in the charts—the film has so far grossed a total of 30.26 million pounds for Buena Vista International.

KEATON. Plays successful architect whose wife dies mysteriously in "White Noise."

"Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events," starring comedian Jim Carrey as the evil Count Olaf, slipped from second to fifth position, while Nicholas Cage's "National Treasure," an adventure film about a treasure hunter looking for a war chest, slipped to No. 6.

The caper, "Without a Paddle," was in seventh position, making over 498,000 million pounds, while "The Phantom of the Opera" was not far behind, making over 497,000 pounds to secure eighth position.

Action-drama

Ninth was the "The House of Flying Daggers," a Chinese action-drama set at the end of the Tang Dynasty, which has so far grossed 2.71 million pounds for Pathe.

Rounding out the top 10 was "The Polar Express," an animated family film voiced by Tom Hanks, which sold over 298,000 pounds worth of tickets last week, bringing its total gross after six weeks to 9.12 million pounds. *Reuters*

What's in a name? NUT, to me

By Behn Cervantes

ONE of my mischievous tricks is to inform a shocked public after I have done something really scandalous that my name is Nestor Torre.

I have done that for years. So, after giving a rather off-color joke to an astounded class, I would say: "Oh, by the way, if you must know, my name is Nestor U. Torre."

Since the course description had been published in the university's schedule of classes, I figured that the students knew their professor's name.

Imagine my shock when, at the end of the term, one student wrote in his finals book *Nestor U. Torre* under *name of professor*. Naturally, he got the grade he deserved for being so information-challenged.

Thrill

On another occasion when Nestor and I were shopping together, we overhead girls arguing among themselves. They pointed at me and said: *"Si . . . si . . ."* as they tried to figure out who I was. I ignored them, although there was an egoistic thrill when strangers recognized you, *di ba?*

Finally, one of them excalimed, *"Si . . . si* Gary Lising!," as if she had come upon the answer to the jackpot question. I immediately gave the errant identifier a dirty look and said, *"Heh! Hindi ako si* Gary Lising!" Nestor was laughing so loudly that I couldn't add, *"Si* Nestor Torre *ako!"*

On another occasion while I was window shopping in a department store, one particular salesgirl was very attentive to me.

Then, she confessed I seemed familiar to her. Did I perchance appear on television? *"Minsan* (sometimes)," I coyly confessed. *"Di ba . . . si . . .* (deep in thought and ticking off a series of names in her mind). . . *si? Si?"*

Frustrated

Frustrated, she loudly slapped my arm and demanded, *"Sino ka nga?"* So much for an ego massage. I huffed, "Nestor Torre!," then quickly walked away, leaving the salesgirl rather perplexed.

Since I have appeared on television discussing matters pertaining to the world of Philippine cinema, I am also mistaken for a movie scribe. To that, I retort a curt: "Negative!," and refuse to pursue the conversation any further.

Also, since I have often been on panels against censorship, I am asked if I am Armida Siguion-Reyna's brother. Another time, I was asked if I was Maning Borlaza. "Nahhh," I answered rather calmly, *"Kalbo 'yon."* Manny Castañeda? "Nooo!" Horrors!

Interested

At another time yet, my niece Fini and I were shopping when I became interested in a product on sale. I asked if the store gave senior citizen discounts.

"Wala po sir," the girl countered. *"Bakit wala?,"* I demanded to know in cognizance of my rights. *"Ikaw naman, ang yaman-yaman mo na nga, e,"* she countered. *"Di, ha . . . mahirap lang ako,"* I replied.

Now eager for tit for tat, she continued: *"Di ba direktor ka?,"* she asked again. *"Oo, minsan,"* I said. *"Sabi ko na nga ba, e—si* Ishmael Bernal *ka, di ba?"*

"Sino!?," I half-shouted. My niece and I darted bemused looks at each other, but I was rather shocked at this eerie experience of being mistaken for someone long dead.

The girl quickly realized she had committed a *faux pas* but wasn't really sure what she did. I moved closer to the ruffled girl, then whispered: *"Hoy, patay na yon."* She made an immediate sign of the cross and that ended the conversation, pronto.

Of course, nothing surprises me more than when students enrolled in my class would ask for my name. I say: "My name, you ask? Didn't you study the course description? Didn't you read the name of the professor before you enrolled?

Stress

"I am Behn with an H," I stress and leave it at that. They should be able to figure out the rest! Of course, what I really want to say is: "Don't you know who I am? I am Nestor Torre, Maning Borlaza, Manny Castañeda, Gary Lising and even my dearly departed friend, Ishmael.

"However, if you must *really* know my name: I am Alain Delon!" Now, *that* is a name I could live with!

How to direct and develop child actors

By Nestor U. Torre

IN the course of our stage, TV and film directing career, we've worked with many child performers. In addition, we teach acting workshops for young talents.

These and other experiences have made us arrive at these conclusions regarding the effective direction and development of child performers in the Philippine context:

In general, directors of child talents here have to first undo the bad performing habits inculcated into the young performers by their parents, teachers and early trainors.

Messy mixture

Many Filipino children are trained to regard performance as a messy mixture of *gaya-gaya*, *porma*, *pa*-cute and *pa*-impress. When they have to deliver dialogue, their adult mentors read it for them, and the kids simply imitate what they hear and see.

When they're made to sing a song, they just ape the singing style of the tune's original singer in the album, down to his last musical curlicue. When they dance, they learn the steps and perform them automatically, with no genuine emotion and interpretation.

In addition, they're (wrongly) taught that child performers have to be relentlessly cute, laugh and cry on cue, act like little adults, and resort to gimmicks to keep their audience entertained and impressed.

Wrong, wrong, wrong. That's why very few child stars really make it in show biz these days, because they've been trained to focus on the superficial and imitative elements of performance, not on the thinking, believing, feeling and interpreting that must take place beneath the surface.

Superficialities

So, when we direct children, we first try to remove all those superficialities that the young talents use as performance "crutches," and urge them to first try to understand the characters they're playing, their needs, and their reasons for behaving the way they're supposed to in the script.

Alas, some kids have gotten so used to rote acting that they're unable to make this all-important shift to more creative and truly felt performance.

So, even if they look good and are as pert as all get-out, we can't give them lead roles, and they are consigned to playing bit parts, where their stilted kind of acting will do less damage to the production.

MUHLACH. He became a popular child star because he understood that acting must come from within.

As for the kids who are able to understand that acting must come from within, the opportunities for growth are practically limitless.

Soon, they find themselves going from supporting roles to lead parts, and they "carry" the entire production on their little shoulders, because they have learned how to act naturally, and the audience loves them for it.

Heart and mind

So, if you want your child to become a successful performer like Niño Muhlach, you should stop making him imitate you, and focus instead on making him understand that performing must involve his heart and mind.

When you rehearse him in a scene, don't read the dialogue for him, simply make him understand what it means, why the character is saying it, and what he wants to happen in the scene.

After this preliminary prepping, leave your child alone to think, feel and say the lines *his* way, so that his performance is believable and thus empathetic, because it springs from within him, where all true, affective emotions come. All else is decoration.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 15, 2005

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Foreign firms back gov't move on Naia 3

By Abigail L. Ho

THE FOREIGN Chambers of the Philippines, an umbrella organization of various foreign chambers of commerce, is pushing for the immediate opening of the controversial Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal 3 (Naia 3).

In a statement, the group reiterated its support for the government's decision to expropriate the Naia 3 facility, saying it would be in the best interest of stakeholders to reach an amicable settlement at the soonest possible time.

"We believe it is justified given the importance of the facility and the inability after two years to reach any kind of agreement between the parties," the group said in a statement issued yesterday.

The group pointed out that due to the protracted dispute among the stakeholders, including the government, German airport operator Fraport AG and the Cheng family of Philippine International Air Terminals Co. Inc., the facility would just deteriorate even without being commercially operated.

Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima agreed with the foreign chambers, saying all stakeholders would benefit anyway when the Naia 3 becomes operational within this year.

"Stalling the opening of the Naia 3 complex will only turn off investors who are interested in doing business in the country. Even the foreign chambers have been clamoring for its opening in the not-so-distant future," he said in a separate statement yesterday.

Instead of being "a thorn in the country's investment and tourism promotion" efforts, he said the Naia 3 complex should already be raking in revenues and contributing to the national economy.

The foreign chambers said the government's decision to expropriate the airport terminal was a "practical solution" to the Naia 3 problem.

However, certain conditions must also be met to ensure that all parties concerned would not find themselves at the losing end of the deal, the group said.

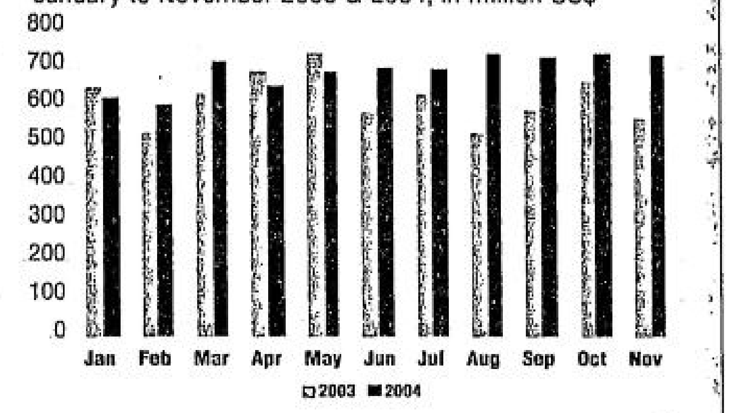
Efforts to reach an amicable and reasonable settlement amount as well as the payment method for this just compensation should continue. A fair and agreeable initial payment should also be made to the affected parties.

"The action of expropriation is always a risky action for any government. But there are times when it is clearly in the best national interest to do so, as long as fair and just compensation is paid," the group said.

Signatories of the statement included the American Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Australian-New

FOREIGN/ B2

OFW REMITTANCES
January to November 2003 & 2004, in million US$



OFW remittances surged 27.7% in November

By Doris C. Dumlao

DOLLARS sent home by overseas Filipino workers surged by 27.7 percent in November to $740 million from a year ago, still supported by the seasonal rise in money transfers for Christmas spending.

This brought the January-to-November OFW remittance level to $7.7 billion, or 11 percent better than the $6.9 billion posted in the same period last year.

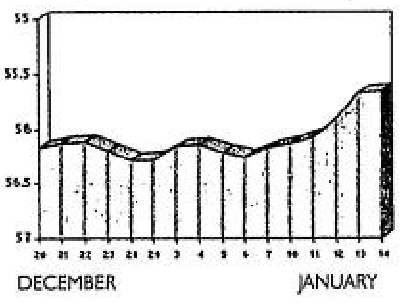
"This level already exceeds expectations of a 6-percent growth for the whole of 2004," Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Rafael Buenaventura said yesterday.

OFW/ B2

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 55.66= $ 1

As of 5 p.m., Jan. 14, 2005

¥ 102.98 = $ 1

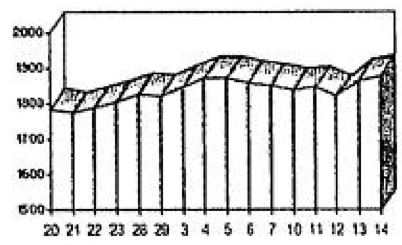
As of 5 p.m., Jan. 14, 2004

GOLD: $ 426.40-426.90

per ounce Hong Kong, Jan. 12, 2005

STOCK MARKET

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

Shares close 0.59% higher

SHARE prices closed 0.59 percent higher yesterday on last-minute buying in select blue chips, dealers said.

They said some market players took profits early in the session on caution following Wall Street's overnight decline, but punters were quick to buy again once they reckoned share prices had fallen far enough.

The Philippine Stock Exchange composite index gained 10.92 points to 1,876.03 after trading between 1,862.09 and 1,877.07.

Turnover totaled 2.49 billion shares worth P1.52 billion from 1.67 billion shares valued at P1.59 billion on Thursday.

The broader all-shares index gained 2.47 points to 1,158.95.

Gainers led losers 56 to 27, with 52 stocks unchanged.

"We had a day when the market suffered a big drop, then followed by a sharp rise. It seems the market is undecided where to go. We will probably see more of what we're seeing today next week," said Jose Vistan of AB Capital Securities.

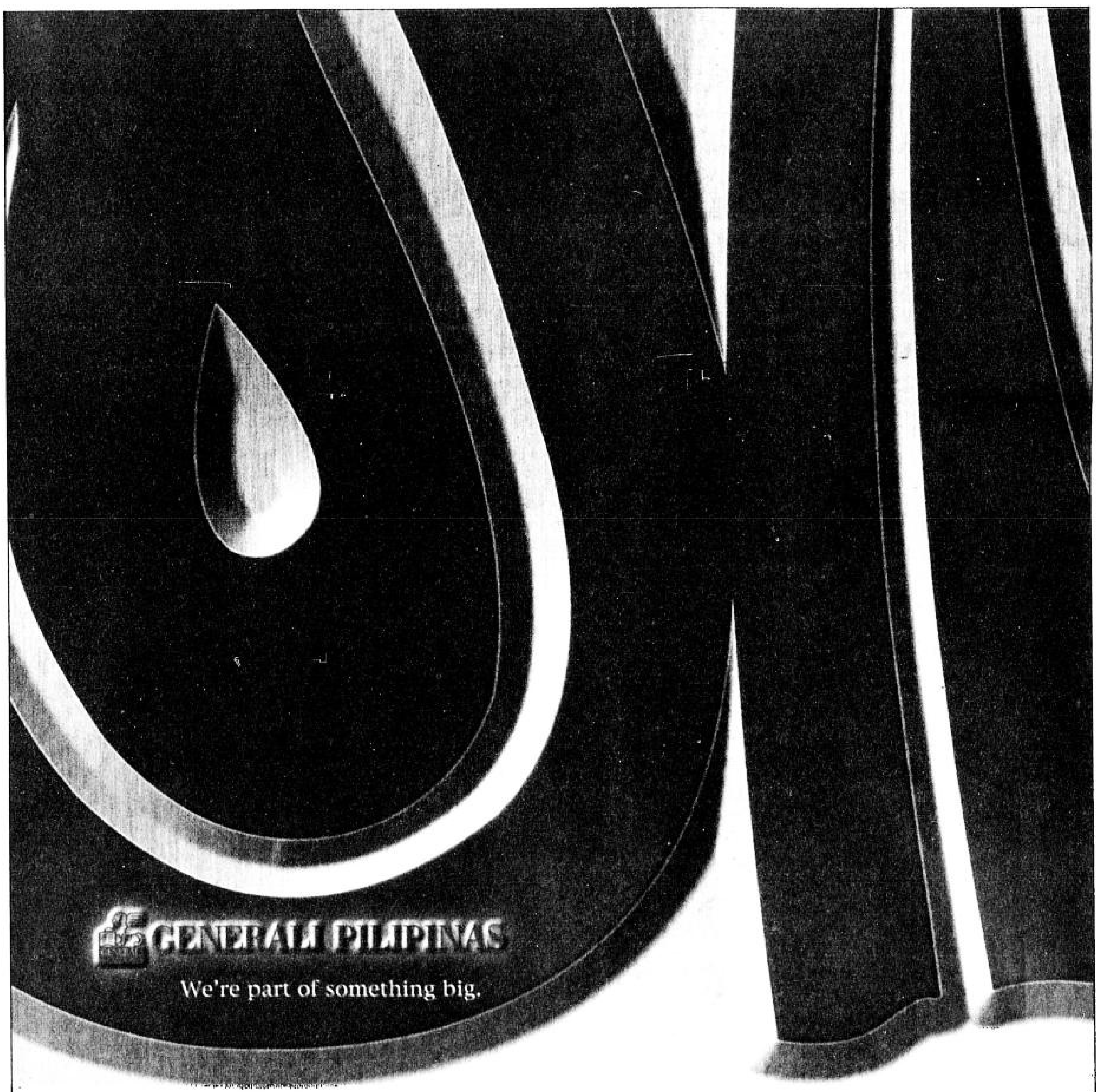
He said Wall Street's weak start to the year had made investors cautious, despite recent positive economic indicators from the Philippines.

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. was the most actively traded stock, ending up P10 at P1,360.

Ayala Corp. gained 20 centavos to P7.30, while its real estate flagship Ayala Land Inc. was unchanged at P7.70.

Metro Pacific gained seven centavos to 47 centavos, while Bank of the Philippine Islands was up 50 centavos at P54.

San Miguel Corp. "B" shares, available to foreign investors, were steady at P78 while San Miguel Corp. "A" shares, limited to Filipino investors, were up 50 centavos at P58.50. *AFP*



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Neda seen clearing MRT-7 project soon

By Clarissa S. Batino

THE NATIONAL Economic and Development Authority yesterday said it was ready to give Universal LRT Corp., the proponent of the Metro Rail Transit 7 project, a clean first-pass approval soon.

"We are just waiting for some more documents from the group," Neda Director General Romulo Neri said in an interview.

Neri, who is also economic planning secretary, said that among the infrastructure projects, the extension of MRT-3 along Edsa and its link-up to MRT 1 in Monumento was declared a priority project.

He said the transportation department would bid out the MRT-3 extension within the first quarter.

Universal LRT had obtained a conditional first-pass approval from the Neda-led Investment Coordination Committee last year.

The consortium is planning to build a $1.2-billion, 22-kilometer integrated transport system comprised of a mass transit railway to run from San Jose in Bulacan to North Edsa, a depot for public vehicles like jeeps and buses and an eight-story car park.

Several conditions have to be met before MRT-7 could secure a second pass, including the drafting of a concession agreement, a consortium contract and a construction deal.

Eli Levin, chief executive officer of the consortium, said the group was hoping to complete the process in 2 to 3 months, after which the transportation department could conduct a Swiss challenge wherein interested bidders could submit a better proposal.

Since Universal LRT submitted an unsolicited offer, it could match any better offer submitted during a Swiss challenge. An unsolicited offer, however, is not qualified for any government subsidy, according to Neri.

"We have to make sure that MRT-7 is deficit neutral before we give it final approval because it is unsolicited. MRT-3 extension is a solicited bid so it can be entitled to some subsidies," Neri pointed out.

The Palace has also decided to scrap a supplemental agreement forged by the government years ago with Fil-Estate-led Metro Rail Transit Corp. to award the project to the consortium.

Four groups have signified interest to bid for the MRT-3 extension. One is Fil Systems Corp., a unit of FF Cruz & Co.

The much-delayed project spanning 5.12 kilometers to link LRT Line 1 and MRT-3 in Monumento is essential to complete the metro railway loop. It would ease commuters' travel and allow them to easily move from one line to another.

LRT-2, which runs from Santolan in Pasig to Recto Ave. in Manila, would be connected to LRT 1 before year's end through the Doroteo Jose station. LRT-2 connects with the MRT-3 through the latter's Cubao station.

Close to 800,000 commuters use the three railway systems each day and of these, 400,000 board the MRT-3. The completion of the loop is seen to increase ridership.

Slated for operation by 2009, MRT-7 is expected to move between 650,000 and 800,000 passengers daily. It would have 13 elevated and one underground (at the Quezon City Memorial Circle) stations. The trains would run at a speed of 85 kilometers an hour compared to MRT-3's 60 kph.

As part of the performance undertaking that the consortium was asking the government, the $900-million loan would be paid by the state over a 15-year period.

The Sy family, through SM Capital and BDO Capital, is also one of the major shareholders of Universal LRT together with the Go family of Equitable PCI Bank, Penta Capital, Japanese firm Premier Gold and EL International Corp. of Levin.

Levin said the project aims to decongest Metro Manila by encouraging buses and jeeps to bring passengers from the North to the Bulacan terminal through a 17-kilometer highway the group would build from Marilao to San Jose del Monte.

International Finance Corp., the investment arm of the World Bank, has committed to take a 30-percent interest in the project. Foreign contractors like Japan's Sumitomo Corp., France's Alstom, Germany's Siemens, China's CNTIC, and EEI Corp. of the Yuchengco family are also part of the consortium.

ERC orders 6 electric co-ops to give back ₱124M to customers

By Abigail L. Ho

THE ENERGY Regulatory Commission has ordered six electric cooperatives to give back to their customers P123.7 million worth of overcharges collected from as far back as 1996.

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The overcharges, the ERC said in a statement, were linked with the purchased power adjustment (PPA) component of their monthly electricity bills.

Among those which have to do a refund are the La Union Electric Cooperative Inc. for some P99.9 million in PPA over-recoveries spanning the period from February 1996 to April 2004, Quezon II Electric Cooperative Inc. for P5.3 million in overcharges collected from January 2000 to November 2003, and Lubang Island Electric Cooperative Inc. for P444,098 in excess charges from February 1996 to July 2004.

Other firms that need to implement a rebate include the Masbate Electric Cooperative Inc. for a total of P5.4 million in overcharges from February 1996 to May 2004, Davao Oriental Electric Cooperative Inc. for P7.2 million in excess charges from February 1996 to April 2004, and Occidental Mindoro Electric Cooperative Inc. for P5.5 million in PPA over-recoveries from February 1996 to March 2004.

While ordering six electric cooperatives to implement refunds, the regulatory body also authorized four power distributors to collect PPA under-recoveries from their respective customers.

These electric cooperatives include the Leyte I Electric Cooperative Inc. (Leyeco I), Pangasinan I Electric Cooperative Inc. (Panelco I), Iloilo I Electric Cooperative Inc. (Ileco I) and Romblon Electric Cooperative Inc. (Romelco).

Leyeco can collect P8.7 million in under-recoveries covering the period from February 1996 to August 2004, Panelco I can charge its customers a total of P4.7 million worth of PPA under-recoveries from February 1996 to September 2003 and Ileco I can collect some P3.9 million in under-recoveries from February 1996 to August 2003.

Romelco has total collectibles of P2.2 million from Romblon Island for under-recoveries from February 1996 to December 1997 and from Sibuyan Island for under-recoveries from December 1999 to March 2004.

The firm can also collect an additional P176,762 from its Romblon customers and another P158,798 from its Sibuyan customers for PPA under-recoveries from January 1998 to November 1999.

"As a regulator, it is incumbent upon ERC to protect the interests of both the electricity providers and that of the consumers. The Commission makes sure that charges to electricity consumers are fair and just," ERC Chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said in a statement.

The PPA is a component in monthly electricity bills that reflects fluctuations in the power supply charges of the state-owned National Power Corp. and various independent power producers.

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INVITATION TO APPLY
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of the

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MARKET MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

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The Trial Operations Program is a dry-run of the Wholesale Electricity Spot Market (the "WESM") to fully test the Market Management System in a live environment and to prepare participants before the commercial operation of the WESM. Program participants will have access to comprehensive training programs, on line assistance and will also be involved in the actual testing of the WESM-MMS thus gaining the experience and in-depth knowledge that will help ensure their future success in the market. The preparation for the WESM is at its final stages and feedback from Program participants will provide the PEMC with valuable insight and experience in working with the industry and its interaction with the market. As such, Program participants will be directly involved in the shaping of the future Philippine Electricity Industry and help ensure its long-term sustainability.

The Program is scheduled towards the end of the first quarter of 2005. Registration for participation in the Program begins on **17 January 2005.**

Applicants who meet the mandatory requirements will be allowed full participation in the Program. Applicants who do not meet these requirements will be allowed to participate initially as observers until compliant.

Interested participants are may begin to submit expressions of interest to the **Market Operations Group**, Philippine Electricity Market Corporation, 9th Floor Robinsons Equitable Tower, ADB Avenue, Ortigas Center, Pasig City, Facsimile (+632) 636-0802, E-mail registration@wesm.ph.

For further inquiries, please contact PEMC through **Engr. Edwin Mosa** at the above address or at telephone (+632) 631 8734.

Additional information on the Trial Operations Program is also available at the WESM website - www.wesm.ph.

Frankly, my deal

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

FRANKLY, my dear, I have been meaning to do something about our high unemployment figure myself.

It is about 11 million people, you see, counting the "underemployed" and the ... well, "employed but not paid."

But I regret to inform you that this cute administration of Gloriaetta already beat me to it, using nothing but fertile imagination.

Under this cute administration, the Department of Labor and Employment, or Dole, succeeded where other previous administrations before it failed.

This cute administration was able to reduce the unemployment figure by more than a million in just a few minutes.

Based on news reports, the Dole simply changed the definition of "unemployed" and—presto—the jobless rate is down by three percentage points.

Just like that!

Today the "unemployed" is not just a person who has no work. The "unemployed" must be somebody who has no job but who is looking for one.

Alright, Gloriaetta herself thinks that the new definition of the Dole is actually the "international standard" for measuring the unemployment rate.

Well and good!

Down here in my barangay, however, we know nothing about "international standard" and such. We don't care about some goddamn definition.

We just want the drop in the unemployment figure to come about, because people actually found real paying jobs. We have poor imagination, you see.

* * *

IMAGINATION nevertheless is not lacking in the multibillion-peso financial deals in big business nowadays, particularly the latest ones involving San Miguel and First Pacific.

As everybody in the stock market knows, the local conglomerate San Miguel is on a buying spree overseas.

In Australia it already bought the beer company Boggs and the juice company Berri, and it reportedly submitted the best bid for the dairy company National Foods.

Reports also have it that San Miguel is in a tight contest for the acquisition of Del Monte Pacific, competing against taipan Lucio Tan.

All in all, those four big acquisitions of San Miguel can easily cost a whopping $2 billion. No sweat!

Word going around the stock market has it that San Miguel already raised the money while everybody was having a ball.

* * *

DURING the holidays, while everybody else was on vacation, San Miguel vice chair Ramon Ang was busy working on the company's $1.2-billion bid for National Foods.

From what I gathered, Ang was raising some $2 billion short-term financing for San Miguel's acquisition of the four companies. They are the three food and beverage companies in Australia, and, possibly, the Del Monte interest in the Philippines and Indian subcontinent.

And Ang was doing it right in his office in San Miguel building in Ortigas Center, holding teleconferences with five major international banks.

Word is that the top executives of the banks regard the San Miguel "deal" involving the four new acquisitions as nothing short of "brilliant."

One of them actually pledged $1 billion, and the rest was divided among the other four, with one US bank begging off due to its public relations trouble in Asia.

Know what? San Miguel may be able to pay them back within the year.

* * *

IN banking, nonetheless, word is going around that the closest rival of San Miguel for National Foods—a gigantic group called Fontina—will come back with a higher bid.

Citing "reliable sources," one banker told me that the group is willing to offer 10 to 16 percent more than San Miguel's bid.

That means close to $200 million more. The question is, will San Miguel take it sitting down, or will it try to engage Fontina in a bidding war, which may not be good for either of them.

Meanwhile, Kirin of Japan is poised to acquire enough shares in San Miguel for another board seat. It already raised its holdings to close to 20 percent.

But where did Kirin get the additional shares? Well, from the San Miguel retirement fund. But where did the fund get the shares?

Aha! Where else but from the stock market, by slowing acquiring the shares when the prices were low.

No wonder, San Miguel shares are now doing at close to P80 per, from only P50 something a few months ago.

Deals are good for the stock market.

* * *

NOW back in Hong Kong to oversee the investments of his brainchild First Pacific, Manuel Pangilinan, chair of PLDT, is also back on the prowl for deals.

First Pacific just did up a $500-million five-year bond flotation, which is said to be getting much cheaper rates than an earlier float done by the same group.

Together with First Pacific's equity in the highly profitable PLDT, the bond float thus can give First Pacific a $1-billion war chest. For acquisitions, what else?

Word is that the cost of the new bond float will come up to about 6 percent a year, as against the rate of 8.25 percent for the earlier bond float.

That earlier one was secured by the shares of First Pacific in Indofood, which is based in Indonesia.

The new bond float has a different feature: the bondholders may convert the bonds into ... well, PLDT shares. This is the kicker.

* * *

IT seems First Pacific put up the four percent of PLDT's outstanding shares as kicker for the cheap bond float.

If the bondholders choose to convert the bonds into PLDT shares, they must pay a conversion premium which can bring up the price of the share to P2,200 per, while the PLDT shares are now doing at P1,300 per share.

The bondholders have five years to exercise the option.

But another feature of the bond is, First Pacific can defeat the conversion by paying for the bonds in cash.

That should make the P2,200 per share conversion premium a magic figure—some sort of a guide in the stock market.

For if the share prices are lower, as it is today, First Pacific may always elect to pay for the bonds in cash.

OFW remittances surged . . .

From page B1

The BSP chief said that aside from the seasonal transfers for the Christmas holidays, the continued rise in OFW remittances could be partly attributed to the growing demand for Filipino workers abroad.

He said another factor was the sustained marketing pursued by Philippine banks, which meant that more remittances were now being coursed through the formal banking channel.

"Local commercial banks pursued vigorous marketing efforts to promote their money transfer services—through increased number of remittance centers, tie-ups with foreign financial counterparts and more efficient delivery services—amid the growing number of Filipinos working abroad," Buenaventura said.

Citing preliminary data on new hires and rehires from the Philippine Overseas Employment Administration, Buenaventura said the Filipino workers deployed in the 11-month period grew by 1.3 percent to 811,773 from 801,351 a year ago.

The number of sea-based workers went up by 3.6 percent to 208,091 from a year ago while land-based workers rose by a marginal 0.5 percent to 603,682.

Throughout the years, the Philippines has been relying on huge remittances from OFWs to boost domestic consumer demand.

Relative to the size of the country's economy, the amount of OFW inflow is now equivalent to about 10.5 percent of gross domestic product. It now accounts for about 20 percent of the value of the country's exports of goods and services and about 1.8 times the value of net electronic exports.

OFWs remittances have likewise exceeded the amount of gross inflows of foreign direct investment since the 1990s. During the past two years, annual OFW inflow also approximated 45 percent of the country's stock of gross international reserves.

For its part, investment bank Credit Suisse First Boston said unlike the earlier business cycles when OFW remittances were used for consumption spending, the funds were now fueling investments particularly in the property sector.

"We believe that part of the strong surge in overseas foreign worker remittances is being invested in housing," CSFB said. "We expect these dynamics to continue in 2005, further fueling the pickup in low- to middle-end residential property where supply constraints are now emerging and pushing aggregate prices up."

CSFB said around 30 percent of OFWs hold professional jobs who are now contemplating on setting up businesses in their home towns, have a vacation home, or simply coming home to retire after many years of working abroad, leading to a pickup in the construction sector.

Foreign firms back . . .

From page B1

Zealand Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Canadian Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., European Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc., Japanese Chamber of Commerce and Industry of the Philippines Inc., Korean Chamber of Commerce of the Philippines Inc. and the Philippine Association of Multinational Companies Regional Headquarters Inc.

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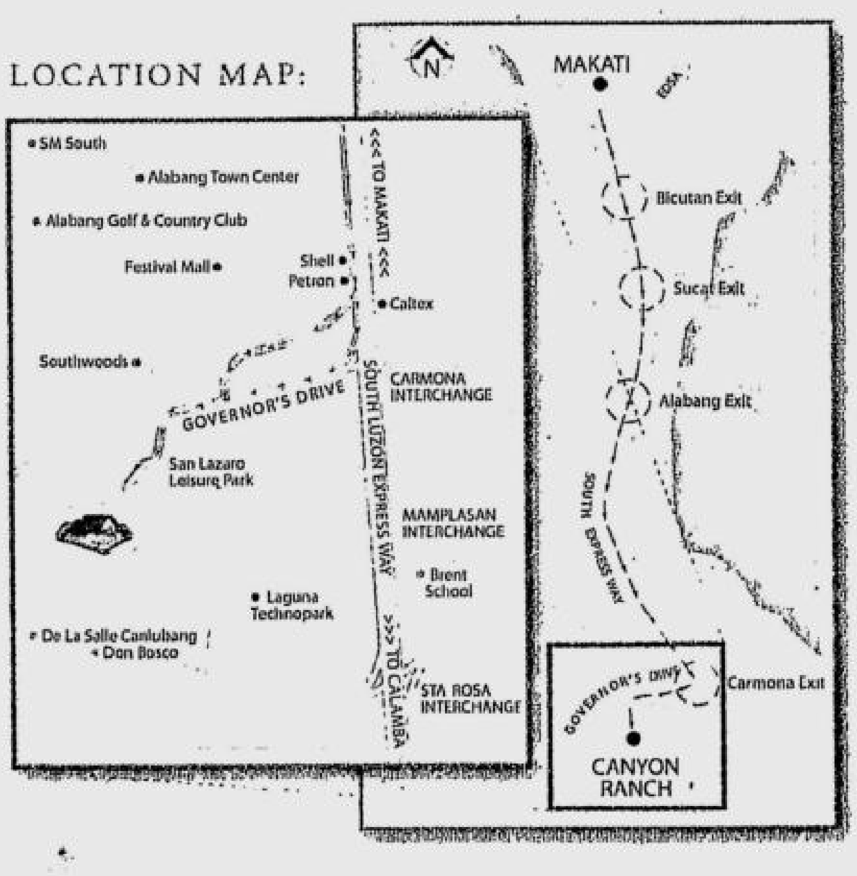
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EDSA
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Sucat Exit
Alabang Exit
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Carmona Exit
GOVERNOR'S DRIVE
CANYON RANCH
SM South
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Alabang Golf & Country Club
Festival Mall
Shell
Petron
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SMC said to net ₱8B in 2004

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL Corp., Southeast Asia's largest food and beverage firm is said to have increased its net earnings by 9 percent to P8 billion in 2004 from P7.4 billion in 2003.

Industry sources said SMC's net revenues last year were estimated at P175 billion, driven largely by beer sales which boosted operating income by 25 percent.

In 2003, SMC's net income was pegged at P7.3 billion while sales hit P148.6 billion.

San Miguel yesterday said in a disclosure that it sold 174 million cases of beer products in 2004, up 15 percent from 2003.

The company's audited financial report for 2004 has yet to be released.

San Miguel kept its growth rate at double digit levels during the first nine months last year with consolidated revenues up 13 percent to P122.4 billion.

Revenue gains were shown across most of the company's businesses, led by a 20 percent increase in domestic beer. Total sales volumes rose 7 percent.

Its consolidated operating income as of September rose to P11.6 billion, up 22 percent from last year. Consolidated net income in the first nine months grew 15 percent to P5.57 billion from last year's P4.84 billion amid higher financing costs from SMC's expansion activities.

Domestic beer operations improved due to improved distribution and the influx of new drinkers, resulting in operating income of P5.2 billion. Sales revenue for nine months rose 20 percent to P26.3 billion.

Robust growth was also achieved from international beer operations, posting sales revenue of $191.8 million, up 14 percent from 2003. Strong performances were registered in Indonesia, Australia and Greater China.

San Miguel is estimating to raise roughly $300 million from its planned stock rights offering this month to partly fund its aggressive expansion in the Asia-Pacific region and beyond.

It earlier said it will issue additional shares equivalent to 10 percent of its outstanding capital stock.

As of September, San Miguel's outstanding shares amounted to 2.85 billion shares, of which 10 percent would roughly represent 285 million shares. Its board approved the issuance of additional shares coming from treasury shares.

Existing shareholders will have the preemptive right, or the right to subscribe, to the additional issuance at a ratio of one share for every ten shares owned.

SMC officials are hoping that the documents required for the proposed stock offering will be filed by the third week of this month. SMC appointed ABN Amro Rothschild as global coordinator and Sycip Salazar as legal counsel for the offering.

RP edges closer to being delisted from money laundering blacklist

By Doris C. Dumlao

A REVIEW mission from the Paris-based Financial Action Task Force (FATF) against money laundering will conduct an onsite visit next week to determine whether the Philippines may be stricken off the list of so-called "uncooperative" countries.

A Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas report said the onsite visit by the FATF review group on Jan. 17 would be the "last of a three-stage delisting process."

According to the BSP, the visit "signifies that the Philippines' implementation plan has been found proper and in order by the FATF."

Through the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC), the BSP said the country continued to build on efforts to remove itself from the blacklist.

"During its October 2004 meeting in Paris, the FATF Plenary recognized the Philippines' substantial progress in money laundering investigation and prosecution, as well as in international cooperation," the BSP report said.

The BSP stressed that efforts to strengthen the domestic financial sector required the stamping out of illegal activities such as money laundering.

The FATF is an organization formed by member-countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development, which includes the powerful Group of Seven developed nations. The organization included the Philippines in the original list of 15 non-cooperative countries and territories released in 2000. At that time, the country did not have a law on money laundering.

Money laundering is a crime whereby the proceeds of an unlawful activity are transacted, thereby making them appear to have originated from legitimate sources.

The FATF's Asia Pacific Review Group will conduct the onsite visit to confirm the effective implementation of the Philippines' anti-money laundering law. In a letter dated Oct. 22, FATF president Jean Louis-Fort informed Rafael Buenaventura, AMLC chair and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas governor, that consistent with FATF's policy on implementation and delisting, the review group would examine and hope to find continuing progress on the full range of implementation issues.

The issues cited included: filing of suspicious activity reports, analysis and follow-up of reports, the conduct of money laundering investigations, examinations of financial institutions, international exchange of information and the provision of budgetary and human resources.

The Philippine government hopes that the results of the FATF mission's evaluation could be taken up in the next FATF Plenary meeting in February.

In 2001, the Philippines passed a law against dirty money activities, but it still failed to convince the FATF that its new legislation complied with international standards.

Meanwhile, the amended Philippine law against dirty money allows the government to look into any transaction—whether single, series or combination—worth at least P500,000. The previous threshold was P4 million.

This gives the authorities the power to probe suspicious cash deposits and investments, or those defined as "without any credible purpose or origin, underlying trade obligation or contract."

In the past, the authorities had to seek a court order before they are given access to suspicious bank accounts, as contained in the bank secrecy law.

6 firms get licenses for power facilities

SIX self-generating facilities will soon be awarded their certificates of compliance (COCs) by the Energy Regulatory Commission, bringing the total number of COCs issued to 254.

In its Jan. 11 meeting, the ERC approved the issuance of COCs to LKG Tower Condominium Corp. with an installed capacity of 5 megawatts (MW), Ju-Young Electronics Philippines Inc. and The Makati Tuscany Condominium Corp. with installed capacities of 500 kilowatts (kW) each, NT Philippines Inc. with a generating capacity of 342 kW, Cristina Condominium Corp. with 125 kW and E. Malabanan Gasoline Station with 20 kW in installed capacity.

Under RA 9136 or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira) as well as current ERC rules and regulations, generating entities all throughout the country need to comply with certain standards that will ensure safe and reliable power supply to consumers.

These standards are contained in the ERC-approved COC guidelines.

Even the power generation facilities of National Power Corp. and the various independent power producers have to pass certain standards to be able to secure their COCs, or licenses to operate, from the ERC.

"A COC is required for any generating entity to ensure that it complies with the technical, financial, environment and health standards set by the Epira law and other pertinent laws," ERC chair Rodolfo Albano Jr. said in a statement.

Only self-generating facilities used exclusively for households, hospitals or clinics are exempted from acquiring COCs. *Abigail L. Ho*

BIR not ready to implement new multi-rate VAT system

By Michelle V. Remo

THE BUREAU of Internal Revenue admitted that there would be problems on tax collection should the multi-rate, value-added tax system push through, as it lacked the capability to enforce the new rule.

According to BIR Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares, the BIR is only 43 percent computerized, and it does not have enough manpower to perform the tedious task of monitoring VAT collection, should the system be changed as provided under the proposed tax measure.

"The BIR can do the matching manually (referring to auditing the accuracy of VAT claims), but by the time our personnel finishes it, the tax period will have already expired," Henares said in an interview.

The BIR raised its concern after senators suggested the implementation of a multi-rate VAT structure, where sensitive products and services will be taxed at a lower rate than the others, instead of the Arroyo administration's proposal to increase the VAT to a uniform rate of 12 percent.

Sen. Ralph Recto, chair of the ways and means committee, earlier said products and services that are currently VAT-exempt, should be imposed a rate of only 6 percent.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile, on the other hand, said the VAT rate should be retained at the maximum of 10 percent, and that lower rates should be applied to products and services that will have the biggest impact on consumers.

But a finance official earlier said that having a multi-rate VAT structure would spawn an administrative nightmare for the government, especially the BIR.

This was because the structure would require a more detailed auditing, i.e. checking whether a company paid its VAT obligations using the right rate for each product or service it availed of itself.

The official also said the burden will also be heavy on taxpayers, who will have to take note of each of the products and service they avail themselves of, together with the appropriate VAT rate, in reporting their VAT liabilities.

Henares said auditing tax payments under a multi-rate VAT structure would not be a problem if all taxpayers remit their taxes electronically.

She said, however, that only the Top 10,000 corporations currently pay their taxes online.

"The remaining 990,000 (corporate) taxpayers are doing it manually, so it means we still have to do the manual labor of encoding," Henares said.

Finance Undersecretary Grace Tan said a multi-rate VAT structure could also worsen the problem of tax delinquency and dishonesty, because some taxpayers may tinker with their tax declarations to make it appear that the products and services they purchased are charged lower VAT rates.

SMC aims for big league with Aussie bid

WHEN San Miguel Corp. opened its first brewery in 1890, company legend has it, one well-lubricated guest made a toast that "doubloons will flow forth" with each new barrel of beer.

Those good wishes, in the dying days of Spanish rule over the Philippines, proved prophetic for a firm that now sells 90 percent of the nation's beer and fills shop shelves with its brands of soft drinks, poultry and processed food.

San Miguel has also grown into the largest food and beverage group in Southeast Asia, and hopes a $1.37 billion bid for National Foods, Australia's biggest milk producer, will help it break decisively into the big league.

Recent Asian acquisitions include a Thai brewery, a hog farm in Vietnam and half of Australian juice maker Berri Ltd.

National Foods is, by far, its most ambitious target.

The deal would also be a rare takeover of a major developed-world company by a poor-country buyer, underlining why San Miguel is a source of national pride in the Philippines.

But the firm must address concerns it may be paying too much, possibly stretching its resources too thinly.

The $1.4 billion market capitalization of National Foods, known in Australia for its Pura Milk and Yoplait yoghurt brands, is more than a third of San Miguel's $3.8 billion.

San Miguel plans to fund the purchase with a rights issue, but that is unlikely to cover more than a third of the cost, meaning it may have to add to debt of about 32 billion pesos ($570 million) as of September 2004.

Jojo Gonzales, managing director of Philippine Equity Partners, said investors had reason to be skeptical, given the failure of San Miguel's acquisitions to deliver results so far, and the possible impact on its balance sheet.

"They haven't really delivered in terms of profitability," he said.

National Foods' net profit of A$68.7 million ($52 million) in the year to June 2004, means San Miguel would get a less-than-spectacular profit yield of about 3.7 percent on its near $1.4 billion investment, another analyst said.

"They're paying a huge premium," he said. "It's not something that would jump out at investors (as a good deal)."

Still, most believe in San Miguel's basic strategy, and warn against underestimating chair Eduardo Cojuangco, a former ally of late dictator Ferdinand Marcos, who has overseen the expansion and tie-up with Japan's Kirin Brewery Co.

Kirin's purchase this week of an extra 4 percent of San Miguel, hiking its stake to nearly 20 percent, was widely seen as a move by Cojuangco to shore up his grip on a company that has been a political football since Marcos was ousted in 1986.

Cojuangco invited Kirin to take the stake and the Japanese firm tends to vote its shares with him.

Jitters over government claims on a 47-percent chunk of San Miguel stock, which it says Cojuangco acquired illegally through his ties with Marcos, have rocked the share price in the past.

Most believe the man, known as "The Boss," with Kirin as an ally, is unlikely to be ousted, despite a court ruling last month awarding the government a 27-percent chunk of shares bought by Cojuangco with Marcos-era tax on coconut farmers.

The government says it plans to hang on to its stake and its seven seats on the 15-seat board until final court decisions enable it to sell the shares on behalf of millions of farmers.

"People shrugged off that (court) decision," said Leo Venezuela, who covers San Miguel at ATR-Kim Eng Securities in Manila. "It's not as politicized as it was about five years ago and I feel that a lot of these joint ventures and acquisitions in a sense actually solidify the current management of the company." *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of January 14, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	9,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	27	27.5	26.5	27.5	519,800
Bank of the Phil. Islands	53.5	54	53.5	54	1,858,300
China Banking Corp.	560	560	560	560	430
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	800
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	47.5	47.5	47	47	48,100
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.41	0.41	3,670,000
International Exch. Bank	16.75	17	16.75	16.75	377,300
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	26	26.5	26	26	263,800
Security Bank Corp.	28.5	28.5	28.5	28.5	64,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	24	24	24	24	112,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Phil. Stock Exchange Inc.	110	110	110	110	4,050
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1795	1795	1795	1795	7,840
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	18	18	18	18	20,200
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.88	1.92	1.88	1.9	24,739,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	930	930	900	910	74,650
Ipeople Inc.	3.8	3.95	3.8	3.9	438,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.047	0.047	0.047	0.047	1,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.033	0.035	0.033	0.035	600,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.3	260,000
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	11,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	3.3	3.3	3.2	3.3	8,912,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1360	1365	1350	1360	156,810
Ivantage Corp.	0.67	0.67	0.65	0.65	520,000
Philweb Corp.	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.012	14,800,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	15.5	15.75	15.5	15.5	60,300
Manila Electric Co. B	24.5	25	24.25	24.75	480,000
Petron Corp.	3.4	3.4	3.4	3.4	2,514,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.2	2.2	63,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.16	1.16	1.14	1.14	196,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Aboitiz Trans. Sys. Corp.	1.7	1.8	1.7	1.8	168,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	6.4	6.6	6.4	6.6	1,713,000
Keppel Phils. Marine Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	110,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.16	1.16	1.08	1.08	160,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.36	0.37	0.36	0.37	1,480,000
Fortune Cement Corp.	0.78	0.78	0.54	0.54	110,000
Holcim Philippines Inc.	2.9	3	2.75	2.9	16,578,000
Republic Cement Corp.	0.9	0.96	0.9	0.96	50,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30.	14,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	27.5	27.5	27	27	47,800
RFM Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	190,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.34	0.34	10,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	49,900
San Miguel Corp. B	78	78	78	78	325,900
Universal Robina Corp.	9.4	9.4	9.4	9.4	1,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.27	0.27	0.27	0.27	260,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Alok-Big Wedge Co. Inc.	7	7	7	7	1,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	7,000,000
Ayala Corp.	7.1	7.3	7	7.3	26,662,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	200,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.3	3.35	3.3	3.35	3,497,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.024	0.026	0.024	0.025	28,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.68	1.78	1.68	1.78	1,380,000
APC Group Inc.	0.09	0.1	0.09	0.0925	8,300,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.008	0.008	0.008	0.008	55,000,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.4	1.46	1.4	1.46	43,000
Bacnotan Cons Indus Inc.	23	23.25	21	21.25	54,300
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.135	0.15	0.135	0.15	200,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.71	0.73	0.7	0.72	17,670,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.16	0.17	0.16	0.16	390,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.225	0.23	1,560,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.18	0.185	0.17	0.185	10,470,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	4.3	4.5	4.25	4.35	13,260,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.029	0.029	0.029	0.029	200,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1.1	1.18	1.1	1.16	1,719,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	6.6	7.3	6.6	7.3	8,123,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	31	31	31	31	967,800
Global Equities Inc.	0.06	0.065	0.06	0.0625	4,200,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.8	0.81	0.8	0.81	3,470,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	3	3.05	3	3.05	270,000
Macroasia Corp.	2.3	2.44	2.28	2.42	4,169,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.24	1.3	1.24	1.28	5,222,000
Magnum Holdings Inc.	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.9	10,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.41	0.47	0.4	0.47	236,830,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	10,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	200,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.38	0.4	0.35	0.4	3,500,000
Seafront Resources Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.29	0.29	80,000
Tanduay Holdings Inc.	3	3	3	3	55,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	50,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.19	0.19	1,150,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6	50,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.87	0.87	260,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.055	0.06	0.055	0.06	5,300,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.65	0.65	0.63	0.63	9,450,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1	1.06	1	1.04	9,930,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.52	0.57	0.52	0.56	840,000
Manila Jockey Club	2.95	3.1	2.95	3.1	12,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.27	0.32	0.27	0.32	5,120,000
Philippine Racing Club	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.8	2,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	18	18	18	18	29,600
Macroasia Corp. Warrants	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	0.0525	500,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	900
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,600
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Y	10.25	10.25	10.25	10.25	1,200
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.7	7.7	7.6	7.7	11,217,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.55	0.52	0.55	670,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.29	0.32	0.29	0.31	28,240,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.15	0.155	0.15	0.15	3,390,000
EIB Realty Developers Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	110,000
Empire East Land Inc	0.35	0.37	0.35	0.37	16,090,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.18	1.26	1.18	1.24	30,622,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.175	0.18	0.175	0.18	2,440,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.63	0.65	0.63	0.65	190,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1	10,000
Philippine Estates Corp.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	200,000
Phil Realty And Holdings	0.2	0.205	0.2	0.205	600,000
SM Development Corp.	1.38	1.4	1.38	1.4	600,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	8.1	8.2	8.1	8.2	12,097,000
MINING					
Apex Mining Co. Inc. A	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	50,000
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.013	0.013	0.013	0.013	132,400,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	4.15	4.2	4.1	4.1	805,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	2.12	2.12	2.1	2.1	50,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.4	0.4	0.39	0.4	11,770,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.46	0.47	0.45	0.47	24,060,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.019	0.019	0.018	0.019	182,600,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.025	0.025	0.025	0.025	191,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0055	0.006	0.005	0.006	1,081,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.82	0.9	0.82	0.89	17,410,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.86	0.95	0.86	0.94	15,740,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.18	0.19	0.18	0.19	350,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.01	0.01	0.01	0.01	7,000,000
Interport Res. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	1,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.006	0.006	0.0055	0.0055	70,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	56,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. A	0.27	0.27	0.25	0.25	1,090,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
Pacifica	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	8,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.44	2.48	2.44	2.48	60,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.055	0.055	0.0525	0.055	7,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	200,000

DISCLOSURES

PHILIPPINE Seven Corp. disclosed the election of Michael Zalamea and Jose Victor Paterno as independent director and director, respectively. Sam Liu was appointed vice president of the company.

* * *

AUGUSTO Nilo was elected director of **Cashrounds Inc.**, replacing Stanley Saguinsin who remains the general manager of the company.

* * *

DANILO Palugod was appointed vice president and compliance officer of **Security Bank Corp.** *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

CURRENCIES

January 14, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.756201	1.000000	55.7010
Japan	Yen	0.007388	0.009770	0.5442
United Kingdom	Pound	1.424002	1.883100	104.8906
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.097058	0.128350	7.1492
Switzerland	Franc	0.645608	0.853752	47.5548
Canada	Dollar	0.629328	0.832224	46.3557
Singapore	Dollar	0.463785	0.613309	34.1619
Australia	Dollar	0.579465	0.766284	42.6828
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.005944	2.652661	147.7559
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.201654	0.266667	14.8536
Brunei	Dollar	0.462367	0.611434	34.0575
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000082	0.000109	0.0061
Thailand	Baht	0.019591	0.025907	1.4430
UAE	Dirham	0.205920	0.272309	15.1679
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.322400	73.6590
Argentina	Peso	0.257430	0.340426	18.9621
Brazil	Real	0.280386	0.370782	20.6529
Denmark	Kroner	0.134403	0.177734	9.9000
India	Rupee	0.017376	0.022978	1.2799
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.199027	0.263193	14.6601
Mexico	New Peso	0.067433	0.089174	4.9671
New Zealand	Dollar	0.533814	0.705916	39.3202
Norway	Kroner	0.122262	0.161679	9.0057
Pakistan	Rupee	0.012716	0.016815	0.9366
South Africa	Rand	0.125939	0.166542	9.2766
Korea	Won	0.000730	0.000965	0.0538
Sweden	Kroner	0.110493	0.146116	8.1388
Syria	Pound	0.014567	0.019264	1.0730
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023863	0.031556	1.7577

Oil jumps to $48/barrel, capping Asian stocks

SINGAPORE—Most Asian stock markets were flat on Friday after a jump in crude oil prices hit shares on Wall Street, but slightly better-than-expected results from Samsung Electronics boosted tech shares.

Japan's Nikkei average rose 0.16 percent in morning trade, with investors cautious ahead of the release of machinery orders and industrial output data later in the day.

MSCI's index of Asian shares outside of Japan had lost 0.19 percent by 0215 GMT.

Shares in Samsung Electronics Co. Ltd. jumped 3.5 percent as investors bet the worst was behind the consumer electronics giant and that mobile phone and flat-screen TV sales were set to take off this year.

The result drove the broader market up 1.6 percent.

Other South Korean technology-related blue chips, such as LG Electronics and LG.Philips LCD Co. Ltd., rallied strongly.

Oil prices surged to a six-week high on Thursday, tracking an 8 percent rally in natural gas as an arctic blast increased heating demand across the US Midwest.

US light crude was steady after settling up $1.67 to $48.04 a barrel in New York. Cold weather was expected to swoop into the US Northeast by the weekend, pumping up demand in the world's largest heating oil market for as long as a week.

The dollar built on overnight gains made after the European Central Bank reasserted its view that Asian currency policy makers should be more flexible.

Still, traders said the dollar's three-year downtrend was firmly intact in the wake of data on Wednesday showing the US trade deficit in November widened to an all-time high.

"You can't ignore the fact that the US has posted record deficits," said a dealer at a European brokerage, adding that once the deficits start narrowing "the dollar's going to surge."

The euro bought around $1.3167, down from $1.3224 in late New York trade. The dollar inched up to 102.88 yen from 102.38. The euro was little changed at around 135.43 yen .

Also helping to support the dollar, the ECB kept its benchmark interest rate at 2 percent on Thursday, keeping intact the 0.25 percentage point advantage that the Fed funds rate has over the euro zone rate.

US stocks tumbled after oil prices climbed, stoking concerns that higher energy costs would squeeze corporate profits, and General Motors Corp. provided a weaker profit outlook.

General Motors, the world's largest car company and a Dow component, fell 2.8 percent after GM said it expects earnings this year to fall, due partly to a $1 billion rise in health-care costs.

The Dow Jones industrial average fell 1.05 percent to 10,505.83. The Nasdaq Composite Index was also down 1.05 percent, finishing the day at 2,070.56.

The Dow and the S&P 500, which lost 0.86 percent, closed at their lowest levels in five weeks, while the Nasdaq was at its lowest in two months.

Japanese steel makers were sold on a newspaper report that mining firm Rio Tinto Ltd. has asked Nippon Steel Corp., Japan's biggest steel maker, to pay 50 percent more for iron ore in the year starting in April.

Taiwan stocks rose 0.5 percent as banking and insurance shares edged higher.

Shares in Hong Kong, Singapore and Australia inched about 0.1 percent lower.

Spot gold was around $424.25 an ounce, a touch below where it was in late New York trade, with dealers predicting tight ranges ahead of the release of the US Producer Price Index for December. The index is expected to offer fresh direction for the dollar. *Reuters*

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US retail sales up; jobless claims rise

WASHINGTON—US retail sales jumped a larger-than-expected 1.2 percent in December as lower gas prices left shoppers with more cash to spend, while cheaper oil also pulled down import prices more than anticipated, government reports showed on Thursday.

But a mixed bag of economic data also indicated first-time claims for jobless benefits increased unexpectedly in the latest week.

The rise in retail sales in December was fueled by sales at auto dealers, furniture stores and online retailers, the Commerce Department said.

Retail sales for all of 2004 jumped 8 percent from the year before, the biggest gain since 1999.

Analysts had been expecting a one percent rise in December retail sales and a 0.4 percent gain excluding autos.

"Consumers for now remain willing to spend freely, sustaining the US expansion. Given that attitude, the Fed remains likely to continue boosting the Fed funds rate at upcoming meetings," said UBS economist Maury Harris.

In currency markets, the dollar lost ground against the euro and the yen at first, but rebounded as European Central Bank president Jean-Claude Trichet urged Asia to adopt more flexible foreign exchange regimes.

Stocks fell to fresh 2005 lows based on a climb in oil prices, raising concerns energy costs would squeeze corporate profits. The Dow Jones industrial average tumbled 111.95 points, or 2.8 percent, to 10,505.83 on the New York Stock Exchange.

Retail sales were "weaker than expected ex-autos, though the overall number was stronger. That was anticipated given end-of-year auto sales. So basically there is a little more dollar weakness on the back of the number," said Michael Cairns, trading manager at FX Solutions in Ridgewood, New Jersey.

November retail sales rose 0.1 percent, with sales excluding autos up a revised 0.4 percent, originally reported up 0.5 percent.

Sales of motor vehicles and parts in December jumped 4.3 percent, while furniture stores reported a 2.2-percent gain.

Non-store retailers such as online vendors and mail order catalogs showed a 1.9-percent rise in sales.

Economists view retail sales as a dominant component in consumer spending, which in turn makes up two-thirds of US economic output.

Meanwhile, the number of Americans filing initial claims for jobless pay grew unexpectedly last week to 367,000, the highest since late September, the Labor Department reported.

However, the number of those continuing to file claims fell sharply to their lowest level since mid-2001.

A separate Labor Department report showed that the price of goods imported into the United States fell by a much more than expected 1.3 percent in December. *Reuters*

Japan machinery orders surge

TOKYO—Japanese machinery orders staged a surprising surge in November, government data showed on Friday, allaying concerns that cooling exports and production had derailed Japan's recovery from a decade-long slump.

Core private-sector machinery orders, considered an early indicator of capital spending, rose 19.9 percent in November from a month earlier.

It was the first rise in three months in the core index, which excludes orders in the shipping and electric power sectors.

"It's extremely strong. Although these figures are very volatile, we haven't seen such strong numbers recently so the market is reacting to it," said Hiroyoshi Sandaya, a bond analyst at Goldman Sachs.

The rise in machinery orders in November followed falls of 3.1 percent in October and 1.9 percent in September.

Compared with a year earlier, core private-sector machinery orders were up 15.1 percent compared with a median forecast for a 0.9-percent fall.

Some economists, however, were wary of altering their view that the economy had entered a slow patch.

Demand for Japanese high-tech goods, particularly semiconductor-related equipment, led both capital spending and economic growth in early 2004.

But global demand for mobile phones and digital cameras appears to have peaked late late last year and economists said both machinery orders and capital spending may maintain a weaker trend for a while longer.

The government forecast core orders in October-December to be up 1.8 percent from the previous quarter after an 8.4-percent drop in July-September.

"The figures are strong but we can't suddenly turn optimistic about the underlying trend," said Katsuhiro Oshima, economist at Mitsubishi Research Institute.

"Production capacity for the semiconductor-related sector is already high, and there is room for adjustment," he said.

The government too sounded a note of caution.

The Japanese economy grew just 0.2 percent in the July-September quarter on an annualized basis following a contraction of 0.6 percent in April-June. *Reuters*

WTO urges trade breaks for tsunami-hit nations

GENEVA—The World Trade Organization on Thursday urged its member states to consider opening up their markets to imports from countries hit by the deadly tsunami in the Indian Ocean last month.

The Geneva-based WTO said its director general, Supachai Panitchpakdi, wrote to the 148 trading nations to ask them to think "deeply and expeditiously" about ways in which they could adapt their trade policy.

"Obvious possible areas which occur to me and no doubt others will be market access and some restraint in use of trade remedies," Supachai said in the letter.

The global trade chief comes from Thailand, one of the countries affected when tidal waves crashed into coastal areas around the Indian Ocean on Dec. 26, causing huge devastation and killing at least 163,000 people.

Supachai also said trading nations could help in the longer term by pressing ahead with global trade talks, which are primarily meant to help developing nations by lifting barriers in new trade areas such as agriculture.

Sri Lanka, one of the hardest hit countries, is trying to secure concessions from the United States and the European Union to help its clothing exports following the tsunami.

Sri Lanka's ambassador in Geneva, Gomi Senadhire, told AFP that his government would be writing to the EU's Commission to ask it to lift customs duties on clothing from the country for about three months.

"We are also in the process of appealing to the US," he added.

"We need resources to rebuild our economy. What is better than trade?" Senadhire said.

Although Sri Lanka's textiles industry had not been directly affected by the catastrophe, the tourism industry had been widely devastated and the country's economy needed a boost, he explained.

On top of a death toll of more than 30,000 in Sri Lanka, the tsunami caused an estimated $3 billion of damage, according to authorities.

In 2003, Sri Lankan companies paid nearly $220 million in customs duties in the United States. *AFP*

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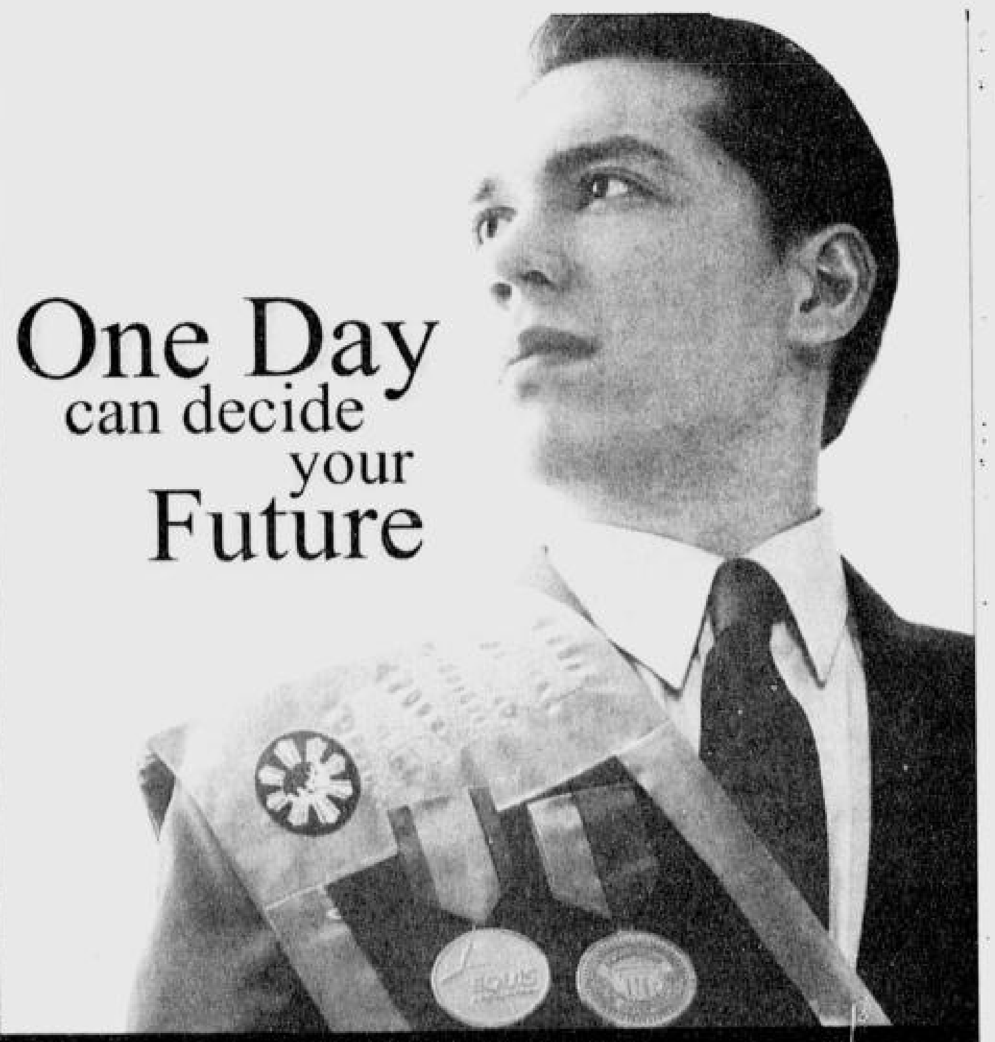

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(near 15th Ave., Aurora Blvd.)

GRAPHIC ARTIST

Male, not more than 25 yrs., Fine Arts graduate, Computer literate, knowledge in Corel, Photoshop, and other related computer applications, creative and systematic.

Look for Ms. Karen, Bring 2 pcs. 2x2 recent photo, resumé, NBI clearance, transcript of records

** with written and hands-on computer test*

WANTED IMMEDIATELY

RECEPTIONIST

- Female/Single
- College Graduate
- Not more than 28 years old
- With or without experience

NOTE: *Bring resumé/NBI/Transcript of Record*

ADDRESS: 1174 Pasong Tamo St., Makati City
Tel. No. 8907279

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRE-SPED Tutor

Male, 27-37 yo, for Homebased program of 12 yo aut boy, Beh Sci Grad. w/ teaching exp, likes baking/cooking, sports, Wt. 140 lbs.+, Ht. 5'4"+, Can work on wknds. Bring Refs, cv, foto, NBI/pol clrns, etc.

Call 7280436, Fax 7250435, Text 09176239977 for appt.

PUBLIC ESTATES AUTHORITY

7th FLOOR LEGASPI TOWERS 200 BLDG. PASEO DE ROXAS CITY OF MAKATI METRO MANILA
Tel Nos (02) 817-47-11 • (02) 817-47-12 • (02) 817-47-13
Facsimile Nos (02) 815-2082 • (02) 815-2050 • (02) 813-1441/48
Website www.pea.gov.ph • Email info@pea.gov.ph

INVITATION TO BID

JANITORIAL AND CLEANING SERVICES TO MAINTAIN THE PREMISES AND BUILDING OF THE PHILIPPINE RECLAMATION AUTHORITY (PRA)

Philippine Reclamation Authority (Public Estates Authority) is inviting janitorial/cleaning offices for the bidding of the janitorial and cleaning services to maintain the premises and buildings of the PRA.

Interested parties may acquire the Terms of Reference (TOR) and bid forms from the Office of the Chairman of the BAC, 8th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, Makati City starting **January 17 up to 24, 2005** upon payment of non-refundable fee of P300.00.

The duly accomplished bid forms must be submitted on or before 10:00 a.m., **February 9, 2005** at the 7th Floor, Legaspi Towers 200 Bldg., 107 Paseo de Roxas St., Legaspi Village, Makati City. Opening of bids will be at 10:15 a.m. of the same day.

The Approved Budget Cost (ABC) for the janitorial services for ten (10) months is P1,600,000.00 inclusive of E-VAT.

Schedule of Pre-Bid Conference shall be held on **January 28, 2005** at 10:00 a.m. at the PRA's 8th Floor Conference Room.

The PRA reserves the right to reject any or all bids without offering any reason, waive any formality or technicality and to award to the bidder whose proposal is deemed more advantageous to the government.

(Sgd.) **ARMINDA A. ALARAS**
BAC Chairperson

Approved by:

(Sgd.) **TEODORICO C. TAGUINOD**
General Manager/CEO

(PDI--Jan. 15 & 22, 2005)

DBP Development Bank of the Philippines

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Development Bank of the Philippines is inviting interested ESCOs to apply for eligibility and submit proposal for:

MODEL ESCO LIGHTING EFFICIENCY PROJECT
FOR DBP HEAD OFFICE BUILDING
ESTIMATED PROJECT COST
P15.137 MILLION

Retrofitting of the existing lighting system for DBP's Head Office building located at Sen. Gil Puyat Ave. corner Makati Ave., Makati City through an Energy Saving Performance Contract.

Pre-Bidding Conference : February 14, 2005 at 2:00 p.m. at Tanghalang Julian Felipe, Penthouse, DBP Head Office

Submission and Opening of Eligibility Documents, Technical and Financial Proposals : On or before February 21, 2005 at 9:00 a.m. at 6/F, OPS, DBP Head Office

Application for eligibility check is open to Energy Service Companies (ESCOs) registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission/Department of Trade and Industry and has been in the development, engineering and implementation of a complete efficient lighting system for at least three (3) years and must be at least 75% Filipino-owned (for partnership and corporations). Interested ESCOs may secure the Eligibility Requirement Form from Program Management 1, 5th Flr., DBP Bldg., Makati City. Submission of the required eligibility documents, Technical and Financial Proposals shall be made on or **before February 21, 2005 at 9:00 a.m.** and addressed to:

The Chairman
Bids and Awards Committee
Development Bank of the Philippines
6/F, Sen. Gil Puyat Ave., corner Makati Ave., Makati City
Fax no. 8151614; e-mail address: procure-psm@devbankphil.com.ph

The Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR) of Republic Act no. 9184 series of 2003 will be used in the conduct of this bidding. Only eligible ESCOs as defined and determined in accordance with IRR-A may participate in the bidding.

The DBP reserves the right to reject documents that do not comply with the requirements of the project.

For further inquiries, please call Ms. Mariam Isolde G. Salvador at tel. nos. 8403435 or 8189511 local 2543.

Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI–Jan. 8 & 15, 2005)

RA Form No. 10.1 (LCRO)

Republic of the Philippines
Local Civil Registry Office
Baguio City

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

In compliance with Section 5 of R.A. Act No. 9048, a notice is hereby served to the public that Marilyn J. Chua has filed with this Office a petition for change of first name from MA. PAZ ALICIA to MARILYN in the birth certificate of MA. PAZ ALICIA MARTINEZ JUGANAS who was born on 27 December 1957 at Sampaloc, Manila and whose parents are Alejandro Q. Juganas and Paz B. Martinez.

Any person adversely affected by said petition may file his written opposition with this Office not later than 31 January 2005.

(Sgd.) **SYLVIA R. LAUDENCIA**
City Civil Registrar

(PDI–Jan. 15 & 22, 2005)

HOUSING AND LAND USE REGULATORY BOARD

Expanded National Capital Region Field Office
2nd Floor, HLURB Building, Kalayaan Avenue,
Diliman, Quezon City

NOTICE

Notice is hereby given that FREEDOM TO BUILD, INC. (owner/developer) has filed with this Board a sworn registration statement for the sale of lots/units at DE LA COSTA HOMES V - PHASE II located at Brgy. Burgos, Rodriguez, Rizal, specifically described as Lot 1 Pcs-04-012934 and Lot 87A (LRC) Psd-25999 (TCT Nos. 351250 and 294539).

All papers relative thereto shall upon request and payment of processing fee, be available for inspection during business hours by any person having legal interest thereon.

Absent any legal impediment, the above-cited project is deemed registered and a certificate, in evidence thereof, shall forthwith be issued after two (2) weeks from the last day of publication.

Quezon City, Metro Manila, Dec. 15, 2004

(Sgd.) **JESSE A. OBLIGACION**
Regional Director

(PDI - Jan. 15, 2005)

Cohrep 13th Convention

MAYOR Abraham Tolentino of Tagaytay City will welcome the delegates to the 13th Annual Convention of the Council of Hotel and Restaurant Educators of the Philippines (Cohrep) at the Development Academy of the Philippines. Set for Jan. 19 to 21, the Convention theme is "3Cs for Professional Growth: Credibility, Creativity, Continuity." Cynthia Lazo of the Department of Tourism will deliver the keynote address. Other speakers are professor Alan Wong (School of Hotel and Tourism Management, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University),. Cynthia Gavino (Ateneo-CEFAM), Francis Kong (Fun Works Inc), Jack Tuason (Discovery Suites) and Helene Pontejos (San Miguel Purefoods). The Philippine Tourism Authority will host the fellowship dinner. For reservations, call Honey (02) 4264840 or 41 local 208; or Isabel (045) 9825554 or (045) 6080305.

Cherry Blossoms will bloom in Pampanga

IN ABOUT five years' time, Pampangueños need not go to Japan or to the United States to get a glimpse of the magnificence of Cherry Blossoms in season. Monoport Traders Inc (MTI), a Japanese agricultural firm working on the rehabilitation of an 85 ha-lahar-devastated land in Porac, Pampanga, has found a way to bring to Pampanga what is known to be the symbol of Japanese culture and one of the most awaited scenes every year. In partnership with the 600th Air Base Wing (ABW) of Clark Field Air Force City headed by Brig. Gen. Charles Hotchkiss, MTI president Tsuyoshi Morita launched a Palawan Cherry Blossoms Tree- Planting Project in Clark's Air Force City before the end of 2004. A total of 750 Palawan Cherry Blossoms were donated, along with 2,000 seedlings of mango, *banaba* and castor bean as MTI's initial contribution to the environmental project in the 250-ha Air Force City. MTI also donated a mini-tractor to be used in the 600th ABW's various agricultural projects, including the maintenance of parks in the area.

Monoport Traders, Inc. is composed of Japanese agriculture specialists who trade their ideas and farming technology with local counterparts in the Philippines to rehabilitate select idle lands in the country. Its pilot area in Porac, Pampanga has been transformed from being a "laharlandia" to a fertile agricultural farm now richly planted with sugarcane, *banaba* trees, castor bean plants, among many others. "One thing that is truly exceptional about our farming technology is that we use *vermi compost* as fertilizer which is effective, organic and cheap. In this organic agriculture system, we make use of the dung of cultured earthworms fed with market waste and other forms of garbage, which most people have a problem getting rid of. Thus, we liaise with market vendors and other local communities for their biodegradable waste, which we then feed to the worms. This way, we actually turn garbage into something very useful: and environment-safe fertilizer." This is what MTI president Morita proudly remarked when asked about their agriculture technology, which they hope to promote among local farmers.

Monoport Traders Inc also offers seedlings of mango, *banaba* and castor bean to, and welcomes joint ventures with individuals, groups or NGOs working for the environmental preservation of Pampanga. Interested parties may contact MTI vice president Rhoda Mercado at 045- 6364164 for seedlings requests or for details on possible tree-planting collaborations.

NREA BOARD 2005 INDUCTED

Rep. Eduardo C. Zialcita (extreme left), chair, Housing Committee of Congress is shown inducting the 2005 officers and trustees of the National Real Estate Association Inc (NREA) led by chair Nestor S. Mangio and president Jose V. Manalad during its traditional Christmas celebration at Club Filipino. Shown are (from left): Ka Pepe Manalad, national president; Rolando Liao and Jun Gultiano, trustees; Gilda C. Lim, VP-external; Raphael G. Baylon, VP-internal; Alejandro S. Mañalac, EVP; Marissa del Mar, PRO; Nestor S. Mangio, board chairman; Reynaldo A. Carpio, vice chairman; Bercy Garcia, secretary general; Manuel dela Cruz, auditor; and Frank Mendoza, treasurer. Not shown are Gilda Ladia, VP-Finance; Juan Concepcion, Jr., trustee ; and Jose A. Rivas, VP-chapters. Also shown at the background are TRB exec. director Manuel G. Imperial and HUDCC vice chair Amado S. Bagatsing. The new board recently held a strategic planning session at The Corporate House Conference Room at Santolan Road in Quezon City. (RGB)

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PUBLIC WORKSHOP DATES

February 10 – 11
February 24 – 25
March 10 – 11
March 17 - 18

Client Testimonials

"I would strongly encourage anyone in management to pursue an opportunity to attend this leadership course. The greatest encouragement, however, would be to the senior leadership of an organization to come and understand these principles and be able to role model them in the organization.. so that when people come back they can see a picture of what it looks like in their own four walls."
-- Tami Heim, President, Borders Books

What I really found unique about this workshop is that the interaction has been outstanding.. The principles are pragmatic and yet purposeful and inspiring... the benefit of this course is its values-based approach"
-- Richard Graham, Hewlett Packard

"Best subject matter and class I have ever attended. My friends, family and employees are wondering what happened to me."
-- Kevin Williams, Director for International Sales, Wal-Mart & Sam's Club

"This was a really good experience to come out and hear what other leaders are doing at other companies, and to have a chance to learn how they are resolving their leadership issues."
-- Darlene Quincy, IT Manager, Delta Airlines

"When I experienced this training, I saw leadership principles I've taught all my life come to life."
- JOHN C. MAXWELL

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Day before publication

LEO A. DAEZ

1st Death Anniversary

Schedule of Masses, Jan. 16, 2005:

Santuario de San Antonio Forbes Park	12:00 NN 6:00 AM 10:00 AM 6:00 PM
Parish of Twin Hearts of Jesus & Mary West Triangle, Quezon City	10:15 AM
Church of Jesus Ateneo de Manila, Katipunan, Quezon City	10:30 AM
Sacred Heart Hillsborough, Muntinlupa	8:30 AM
St. Andrews Bel-Air, Makati Village	6:00 AM
St. James Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa	10:30 AM 4:30 PM 6:00 PM 7:30 PM

CECILIA MAGSARILI ZARATE

Peacefully joined her Creator
on January 12, 2005 at the age of 88.

Her loving children **Norma Reynaldo** and **Lucita & Danilo Principe**; grandchildren **Daniel** and **Noriza**; **Cherry, Lou, Jade** and **Camille**, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at the Immaculate Concepcion Parish Mortuary, Bayanbayanan, Concepcion, Marikina City.

Cremation will be on January 16, 2005 at the Loyola Marikina Crematorium after the 11:15 a.m. Mass at the Immaculate Concepcion Parish Mortuary.

In Memoriam

EVANGELINE LAVADO SANTOS

Mambusao, Capiz (Makati City)
April 20, 1961 - December 31, 2004

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Chapel, Guadalupe.

Interment will be on Tuesday, 18 January 2005, 10:00 a.m. at Loyola Memorial, Sucat, Parañaque City.

In Memoriam

In loving memory of our beloved mommy

Atty. Imelda De Leon Reyes

September 16, 1927 – January 15, 2004

We, her husband **Judge Alex Z. Reyes**; children, family, friends and relatives offer the following masses on January 15, 2005 to commemorate mommy's first year of passing.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Proj. 6, QC		**6 PM**
Lourdes Church, QC		**6 PM**
Sto. Domingo Church, QC		**6 PM**
Quiapo Church, Manila		**7 AM**
Presentation of the Child Jesus, BF Homes, Pque		**6 PM**
St. Jerome Parish, Alabang		**7 PM**
San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish, QC		**6:30 AM & PM**
	January 16	**8 & 10 AM**
PCMC Chapel	**January 12**	**8 AM**

"For those who have been faithful O Lord, life is not ended but merely changed"
We enjoin all readers to pray for her eternal repose

In Loving Memory
ON THE OCCASION OF THE
1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF

MARILOU PEÑARANDA DALIMOCON

CATAINGAN, MASBATE

TODAY, JANUARY 15, 2005

HOLY MASSES WILL BE OFFERED AT THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES:

ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH CHURCH CATAINGAN, MASBATE	5:00 AM & 5:00 PM
ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA CATHEDRAL MASBATE CITY	6:15 AM
BASILICA DE STO. NIÑO CEBU CITY	6:00 AM
CEBU CATHEDRAL CEBU CITY	6:30 AM
STO. ROSARIO CHURCH CEBU CITY	7:00 AM

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."

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KALAW: 528-0213; 527-3342
MEGAMALL: 635-0219; 635-0220

CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PUBLIC BIDDING FOR THE HIRING OF AN ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING DESIGN FIRM FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PHILHEALTH CORPORATE CENTER

NO. 2005-1

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) wishes to invite duly licensed Architectural and Engineering Design Firms with 10 years of experience in similar projects to prepare the schematic and detailed architectural/engineering design as follows:

1. Design of Head Office Building approximately 30,000 sq. meters in total floor area.
2. Design for secondary structures (outside Head Office building) shall be comprised, among others, of: Power House, Generators and sub-station; Maintenance, Motorpool and Driver's Lounge; Records Warehouse; Supplies Warehouse; Gymnasium; and Dormitory.
3. Design for Site Development with a total lot area of 17,230.50 sq. meters to include but shall not be limited to earthworks, fencing, drainage, landscaping, driveways, open parking space to accommodate 150 cars, guard posts, waiting sheds and pump house.

The work shall consist of : Pre-Design Phase *(Estimated Duration Period: 1 month)*; Basic Design Phase A *(Estimated Duration Period: 1 month)*; *Basic Design Phase B* (Estimated Duration Period: 1 month); *and* Construction Phase *(Estimated Duration Period: 18 months)*

The approved budget for the contract is P44,000,000.00.

Submission of Letter of Intent and Issuance of Bid documents will start from January 10, 2005 and will end on January 21, 2005, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committee in the Central Office, Room 1804, Citystate Center, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.

Submission of Eligibility documents will start on January 24, 2005 and the last day is on January 28, 2005. The Pre-Bid conference will be held on February 18, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committee in the Central Office.

Submission of Bids will be on March 1, 2005 on or before 12:00 noon (during office hours) at the Office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). Opening of bid documents will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same date and venue. The official clock shall be the wall clock located at room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.

PhilHealth shall determine the eligibility of bidders based on the submitted eligibility documents using "pass/fail" criteria. Short listing of prospective bidders shall be based on qualification requirement criteria. PhilHealth shall employ a **Quality Cost Based Rating System** with 15% weight for the Financial Proposal on bid evaluation.

PhilHealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, if there is prima facie evidence of collusion between appropriate public officers or employees of the procuring entity, or between the BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between or among the bidders themselves, or between a bidder and the third party, including any act which restricts, or suppresses or nullifies or tends to restrict, suppress or nullify competition; if the BAC is found to have failed in following the prescribed bidding procedures; or for any justifiable ground where the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government as follows: if the physical and economic conditions have significantly changed so as to render the project no longer economically, financially or technically feasible as determined by the head of the procuring entity; and if the source of the funds for the project has been withheld or reduced through no fault of the procuring entity.

The Chairperson - BAC Infra
PhilHealth

(PDI–Jan 9 & 15, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Central Luzon Regional Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The **NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA)** invites suppliers, manufacturers/installers/fabricators to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

NAME OF PROJECT	LOCATION	APPROVED BUDGET
Re-roofing of Duplex Whse # 11	Cabanatuan City	P 3,000,000.00

SCHEDULE OF PRE-QUALIFICATION, PRE-BIDDING AND BIDDING

Issuance of Contractor's Eligibility Forms	Jan. 18-21, 2005
Deadline for Submission of Accomplished Contractor's Eligibility Forms & Requirements	Feb. 01, 2005
Issuance of Bid Documents	Feb. 10, 2005
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 22, 2005 (2:00 PM)
Submission and Opening of Bids	Mar 03, 2005 (2:00 PM)

All interested suppliers, manufacturers / installers / fabricators shall submit their Eligibility Statements and Bid Proposal in the prescribed forms to the Chairman of the Bid and Award Committee (BAC), National Food Authority, Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City.

Eligibility forms may be secured at the NFA-BAC Secretariat upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable fee of Php 500.00 per project.

Bidding Documents and Plans shall be issued only to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 2,000.00 per project.

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contractors shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and other applicable rules and regulations.

Venue for the Pre-bidding Conference, Submission and Opening of Bids shall be at the NFA-Conference Room, Regional Office, Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality and to accept only such bids or to award to any contractor whose bid is considered most advantageous to the National Food Authority.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) RUBEN J. RESIDE
Asst. Regional Manager, RBAC Chairman

(PDI – January 9 & 15, 2005)

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

By virtue of Section III, Article VIII of its Re-Amended By-Laws, and by resolution of the Board of Directors during its regular meeting on November 27, 2004, Valley Golf & Country Club, Inc. will cause to be sold at public auction at its Main Clubhouse, Antipolo City on Friday, February 25, 2005, at exactly 10:00 a.m., the following certificates of stock for cash to the highest bidder(s) to satisfy the principal claims of the Club, plus attorney's fees, surcharges/interests and expenses of sales thereof. The following certificates of stock pertain to delinquent accounts which have remained unpaid for a period over 120 days, posted as delinquent, have exceeded the credit limit as fixed by the Board, and have been previously notified of their delinquent accounts.

Stock Cert. No.	Account No.	Declared Acct. Name	Principal Claim
1206	0862	Ysmael Steel Mfg. Co.	PhP 785,071.49
2144	0957	Vicente T. Chua, Jr.	601,235.62
2158	0976	Victor S. de Vera	438,643.95
1266	0654	Ernesto L. Floro	257,856.60
669	0495	Emilio G. Martinez	257,844.28
601	0176	Felipe L. Liwanag	257,661.14
3338	0511	Emerito M. Ramos, Sr.	171,032.15
1547	0782	S. Kajita & Co.	205,301.11
3240	0036	Anderson Co.	101,026.35
2223	0555	Patrick Boil	105,168.35
2275	0875	Fuller O'Brien Paint Co., Inc.	93,317.75
2817	0087	Aurelio Litonjua/Bank of Commerce	89,249.66
3137	0163	Carola Molitor	88,411.82
580	0355	Carlos Valdez	89,147.21
2375	0560	Isaias Arriola, Jr.	82,140.97

All bids shall be payable in cash immediately after the sale. The Club reserves the right to set a minimum bid price on the terms of the sale.

Antipolo City, January 13, 2005.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

(PDI–Jan. 15, 22 & 29, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE
INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

The asset being offered through Offer from Sale, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, is a parcel of land with an area of 1,454 sq.m., more or less, located at 4812 Sampaguita St., Barangay Sun Valley, Parañaque City, formerly belonging to Delta Motors Corporation.

Indicative Price
P5,816,000.00

Offers will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors on January 28, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for a duly authenticated copy of the sale documents for anominal fee of P500.00.

For more information, please call Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 892-2145 or 818-4733.

(PDI–Jan. 13, 14 & 15, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for public bidding, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, the following asset formerly belonging to Carruf Development Corporation, as follows:

Description	Indicative Price
Land, 1,504 sq.m. located along Maytubig St., Brgy. 710, Zone 78 Malate, Manila	P 24,816,000

Sealed bids will be received on 1 February 2005, at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P500.00.

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Maureen B. Valiente at telephone numbers 817-8762 or 892-2145.

(PDI–Jan. 14, 15 & 16, 2005)

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LEO A. DAEZ

1st Death Anniversary

Schedule of Masses, Jan. 16, 2005:

Santuario de San Antonio Forbes Park	12:00 NN 6:00 AM 10:00 AM 6:00 PM
Parish of Twin Hearts of Jesus & Mary West Triangle, Quezon City	10:15 AM
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CECILIA MAGSARILI ZARATE

Peacefully joined her Creator
on January 12, 2005 at the age of 88.

Her loving children **Norma Reynaldo** and **Lucita & Danilo Principe**; grandchildren **Daniel and Noriza**; **Cherry, Lou, Jade and Camille**, relatives and friends request the readers to pray for her eternal happiness in heaven.

Her remains lie in state at the Immaculate Concepcion Parish Mortuary, Bayanbayanan, Concepcion, Marikina City.

Cremation will be on January 16, 2005 at the Loyola Marikina Crematorium after the 11:15 a.m. Mass at the Immaculate Concepcion Parish Mortuary.

In Memoriam

EVANGELINE LAVADO SANTOS

Mambusao, Capiz (Makati City)

April 20, 1961 - December 31, 2004

Her remains lie in state at Loyola Chapel, Guadalupe.

Interment will be on Tuesday, 18 January 2005, 10:00 a.m. at Loyola Memorial, Sucat, Parañaque City.

In Memoriam

In loving memory of our beloved mommy

Atty. Imelda De Leon Reyes

September 16, 1927 – January 15, 2004

We, her husband **Judge Alex Z. Reyes**; children, family, friends and relatives offer the following masses on January 15, 2005 to commemorate mommy's first year of passing.

Our Lady of Mount Carmel Parish, Proj. 6, QC		**6 PM**
Lourdes Church, QC		**6 PM**
Sto. Domingo Church, QC		**6 PM**
Quiapo Church, Manila		**7 AM**
Presentation of the Child Jesus, BF Homes, Pque		**6 PM**
St. Jerome Parish, Alabang		**7 PM**
San Lorenzo Ruiz Parish, QC		**6:30 AM & PM**
	January 16	**8 & 10 AM**
PCMC Chapel	**January 12**	**8 AM**

"For those who have been faithful O Lord, life is not ended but merely changed"
We enjoin all readers to pray for her eternal repose

In Loving Memory

ON THE OCCASION OF THE
1st DEATH ANNIVERSARY OF

MARILOU PEÑARANDA DALIMOCON

CATAINGAN, MASBATE

TODAY, JANUARY 15, 2005

HOLY MASSES WILL BE OFFERED AT THE FOLLOWING CHURCHES:

ST. VINCENT FERRER PARISH CHURCH CATAINGAN, MASBATE	5:00 AM & 5:00 PM
ST. ANTHONY DE PADUA CATHEDRAL MASBATE CITY	6:15 AM
BASILICA DE STO. NIÑO CEBU CITY	6:00 AM
CEBU CATHEDRAL CEBU CITY	6:30 AM
STO. ROSARIO CHURCH CEBU CITY	7:00 AM

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."

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CLASSIFIEDS

Republic of the Philippines
PHILIPPINE HEALTH INSURANCE CORPORATION
Citystate Centre, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PUBLIC BIDDING FOR THE HIRING OF AN ARCHITECTURAL AND ENGINEERING DESIGN FIRM FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF PHILHEALTH CORPORATE CENTER

NO. 2005-1

The Philippine Health Insurance Corporation (PHILHEALTH) wishes to invite duly licensed Architectural and Engineering Design Firms with 10 years of experience in similar projects to prepare the schematic and detailed architectural/engineering design as follows:

1. Design of Head Office Building approximately 30,000 sq. meters in total floor area.
2. Design for secondary structures (outside Head Office building) shall be comprised, among others, of: Power House, Generators and sub-station; Maintenance, Motorpool and Driver's Lounge; Records Warehouse; Supplies Warehouse; Gymnasium; and Dormitory.
3. Design for Site Development with a total lot area of 17,230.50 sq. meters to include but shall not be limited to earthworks, fencing, drainage, landscaping, driveways, open parking space to accommodate 150 cars, guard posts, waiting sheds and pump house.

The work shall consist of : Pre-Design Phase *(Estimated Duration Period: 1 month)*; Basic Design Phase A *(Estimated Duration Period: 1 month)*; *Basic Design Phase B* (Estimated Duration Period: 1 month); *and* Construction Phase *(Estimated Duration Period: 18 months)*

The approved budget for the contract is P44,000,000.00.

Submission of Letter of Intent and Issuance of Bid documents will start from January 10, 2005 and will end on January 21, 2005, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committee in the Central Office, Room 1804, Citystate Center, 709 Shaw Boulevard, Pasig City upon payment of a non-refundable fee of P5,000.00.

Submission of Eligibility documents will start on January 24, 2005 and the last day is on January 28, 2005. The Pre-Bid conference will be held on February 18, 2005, 10:00 a.m. at the Office of the Secretariat – Bids and Awards Committee in the Central Office.

Submission of Bids will be on March 1, 2005 on or before 12:00 noon (during office hours) at the Office of the BAC Secretariat (Room 1804). Opening of bid documents will follow at 1:30 p.m. at the same date and venue. The official clock shall be the wall clock located at room 1804 (Office of the BAC Secretariat). Any bid submitted after the cut-off time will not be accepted.

PhilHealth shall determine the eligibility of bidders based on the submitted eligibility documents using "pass/fail" criteria. Short listing of prospective bidders shall be based on qualification requirement criteria. PhilHealth shall employ a **Quality Cost Based Rating System** with 15% weight for the Financial Proposal on bid evaluation.

PhilHealth reserves the right to reject any and all bids, or declare a failure of bidding, or not award the contract, if there is prima facie evidence of collusion between appropriate public officers or employees of the procuring entity, or between the BAC and any of the bidders, or if the collusion is between or among the bidders themselves, or between a bidder and the third party, including any act which restricts, or suppresses or nullifies or tends to restrict, suppress or nullify competition; if the BAC is found to have failed in following the prescribed bidding procedures; or for any justifiable ground where the award of the contract will not redound to the benefit of the government as follows: if the physical and economic conditions have significantly changed so as to render the project no longer economically, financially or technically feasible as determined by the head of the procuring entity; and if the source of the funds for the project has been withheld or reduced through no fault of the procuring entity.

The Chairperson - BAC Infra
PhilHealth

(PDI–Jan. 9 & 15, 2005)

NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY
Central Luzon Regional Office
Cabanatuan City

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The NATIONAL FOOD AUTHORITY (NFA) invites suppliers, manufacturers/installers/fabricators to apply for eligibility and to bid for the following project:

NAME OF PROJECT	LOCATION	APPROVED BUDGET
Re-roofing of Duplex Whse # 11	Cabanatuan City	P 3,000,000.00

SCHEDULE OF PRE-QUALIFICATION, PRE-BIDDING AND BIDDING

Issuance of Contractor's Eligibility Forms	Jan. 18-21, 2005
Deadline for Submission of Accomplished Contractor's Eligibility Forms & Requirements	Feb. 01, 2005
Issuance of Bid Documents	Feb. 10, 2005
Pre-bidding Conference	Feb. 22, 2005 (2:00 PM)
Submission and Opening of Bids	Mar 03, 2005 (2:00 PM)

All interested suppliers, manufacturers / installers / fabricators shall submit their Eligibility Statements and Bid Proposal in the prescribed forms to the Chairman of the Bid and Award Committee (BAC), National Food Authority, Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City.

Eligibility forms may be secured at the NFA-BAC Secretariat upon presentation of Letter of Intent and payment of non-refundable fee of Php 500.00 per project.

Bidding Documents and Plans shall be issued only to eligible bidders upon payment of a non-refundable fee in the amount of Php 2,000.00 per project.

All particulars relative to Eligibility, Bid Bond, Performance Bond, Pre-bid Conference, Bid Evaluation and Award of Contractors shall be governed by the provisions of RA 9184 and other applicable rules and regulations.

Venue for the Pre-bidding Conference, Submission and Opening of Bids shall be at the NFA-Conference Room, Regional Office, Maharlika Highway, Cabanatuan City.

The NFA reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any defect or informality and to accept only such bids or to award to any contractor whose bid is considered most advantageous to the National Food Authority.

The NFA assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify the bidders for any expense incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) RUBEN J. RESIDE
Asst. Regional Manager, RBAC Chairman

(PDI – January 9 & 15, 2005)

NOTICE OF AUCTION SALE

By virtue of Section III, Article VIII of its Re-Amended By-Laws, and by resolution of the Board of Directors during its regular meeting on November 27, 2004, Valley Golf & Country Club, Inc. will cause to be sold at public auction at its Main Clubhouse, Antipolo City on Friday, February 25, 2005, at exactly 10:00 a.m., the following certificates of stock for cash to the highest bidder(s) to satisfy the principal claims of the Club, plus attorney's fees, surcharges/interests and expenses of sales thereof. The following certificates of stock pertain to delinquent accounts which have remained unpaid for a period over 120 days, posted as delinquent, have exceeded the credit limit as fixed by the Board, and have been previously notified of their delinquent accounts.

Stock Cert. No.	Account No.	Declared Acct. Name	Principal Claim
1206	0862	Ysmael Steel Mfg. Co.	PhP 785,071.49
2144	0957	Vicente T. Chua, Jr.	601,235.62
2158	0976	Victor S. de Vera	438,643.95
1266	0654	Ernesto L. Floro	257,856.60
669	0495	Emilio G. Martinez	257,844.28
601	0176	Felipe L. Liwanag	257,661.14
3338	0511	Emerito M. Ramos, Sr.	171,032.15
1547	0782	S. Kajita & Co.	205,301.11
3240	0036	Anderson Co.	101,026.35
2223	0555	Patrick Boil	105,168.35
2275	0875	Fuller O'Brien Paint Co., Inc.	93,317.75
2817	0087	Aurelio Litonjua/Bank of Commerce	89,249.66
3137	0163	Carola Molitor	88,411.82
580	0355	Carlos Valdez	89,147.21
2375	0560	Isaias Arriola, Jr.	82,140.97

All bids shall be payable in cash immediately after the sale. The Club reserves the right to set a minimum bid price on the terms of the sale.

Antipolo City, January 13, 2005.

THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
VALLEY GOLF & COUNTRY CLUB, INC.

(PDI–Jan. 15, 22 & 29, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE INVITATION TO SUBMIT OFFERS

The asset being offered through Offer from Sale, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, is a parcel of land with an area of 1,454 sq.m., more or less, located at 4812 Sampaguita St., Barangay Sun Valley, Parañaque City, formerly belonging to Delta Motors Corporation.

Indicative Price
P5,816,000.00

Offers will be received, opened and tabulated in the presence of the offerors on January 28, 2005 at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th Floor, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties may request for a duly authenticated copy of the sale documents for anominal fee of P500.00.

For more information, please call Ms. Melinda B. Cortez of the PMO Marketing Department at telephone numbers 892-2145 or 818-4733.

(PDI–Jan. 13, 14 & 15, 2005)

PRIVATIZATION AND MANAGEMENT OFFICE

INVITATION TO BID

The Privatization and Management Office (PMO) is offering for public bidding, on an "as-is, where-is" basis, the following asset formerly belonging to Carruf Development Corporation, as follows:

Description	Indicative Price
Land, 1,504 sq.m. located along Maytubig St., Brgy. 710, Zone 78 Malate, Manila	P 24,816,000

Sealed bids will be received on 1 February 2005, at 3:00 p.m. at the PMO Conference Room, 6th floor, Privatization and Management Office, 104 Gamboa St., Legaspi Village, Makati City.

Interested parties are advised to deal directly with the PMO Marketing Department. Authenticated bidding documents, together with the Asset Specific Catalogue, may be secured from PMO for a nominal fee of P500.00.

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Maureen B. Valiente at telephone numbers 817-8762 or 892-2145.

(PDI–Jan. 14, 15 & 16, 2005)

PROPERTY

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**

EVEN with limited wall space, a Pella bay or bow window allows one to have more windows and more view—in a limited amount of space.

PELLA windows and doors help home builders bring the beauty of wood into one's home.

Premium brand in doors, windows products now in RP

By Charles E. Buban

NOTHING beats the warmth and beauty of a true wood. Even with the emergence of new materials that mimic or even exceed some of its qualities, wood products have always been unmatched in the natural beauty they offer.

Says Aline Lopez, senior brand manager of Focus Global Inc.: "Our fascination with wood continues, particularly as material for our homes. So manufacturers are continuously looking for ways to improve the qualities of wood products to make them last longer and more resistant to weather and infestation." Focus Global recently announced its latest addition to a host of premium home furnishing brands it carries.

"Pella Corp. is known worldwide for its premium-quality windows, entry door systems, storm doors and patio doors products. Clients can view some of these products here in our Pioneer (corner Reliance street) showroom in Mandaluyong City," informs Lopez.

Founded in 1925

The Iowa-based Pella was founded in 1925 (initially known as Rolscreen Co.) that grew into window manufacturing, and later moved into the sliding glass door market, a now prominent design in American homes.

It offers a full range of residential and commercial products under distinct product lines: Architect Series, Designer Series and ProLine.

Pella's higher-end Architect Series features the patented technology that recreates the charm of true divided light, yet adds a new dimension of energy efficiency and performance.

"Pella uses muntin bars (grilles) that are permanently bonded to the interior and exterior surfaces of insulating glass to simulate the look of true divided light," reveals Focus Global project coordinator (for Pella) Siendy Salazar.

The Designer Series, another Pella's higher-end product line, features the convenience of the company's exclusive between-the-glass blinds, shades or grilles.

"These blinds, shades or grilles are tucked neatly between panes of glass—away from dust, damage and little hands," says Salazar.

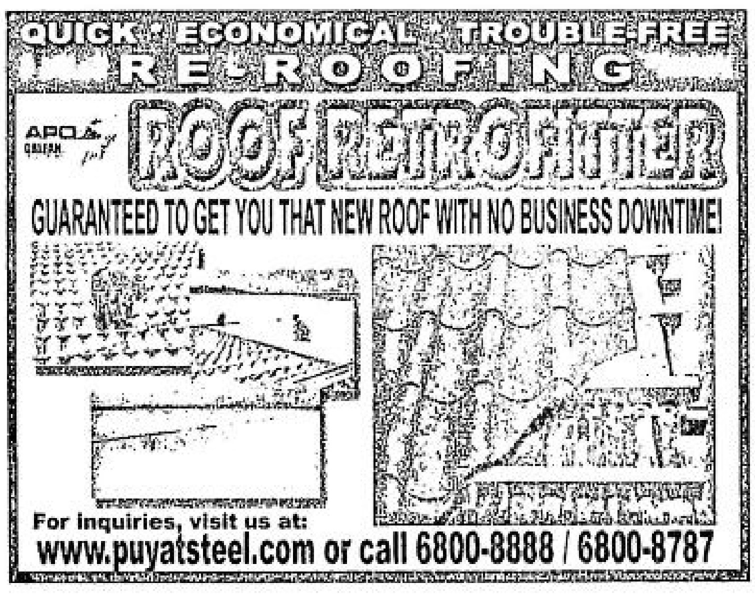
Pella's ProLine Series, the most affordable windows, is available in a wide variety of standard sizes and three standard exterior colors.

Assembled in the US

"All Pella products are assembled in the company's several plants in Iowa, even the custom-made specifications. For our clients (architects, contractors, and homeowners) here, we have a team of professionals who can make recommendations or conduct studies on a particular project, after all measurements are done the specifications are sent to the United States where it will be assembled," explains Focus Global interior designer (for Pella) Ardeliza Claveria.

PREMIUM/ B2-2

> Pella windows are protected against harsh elements



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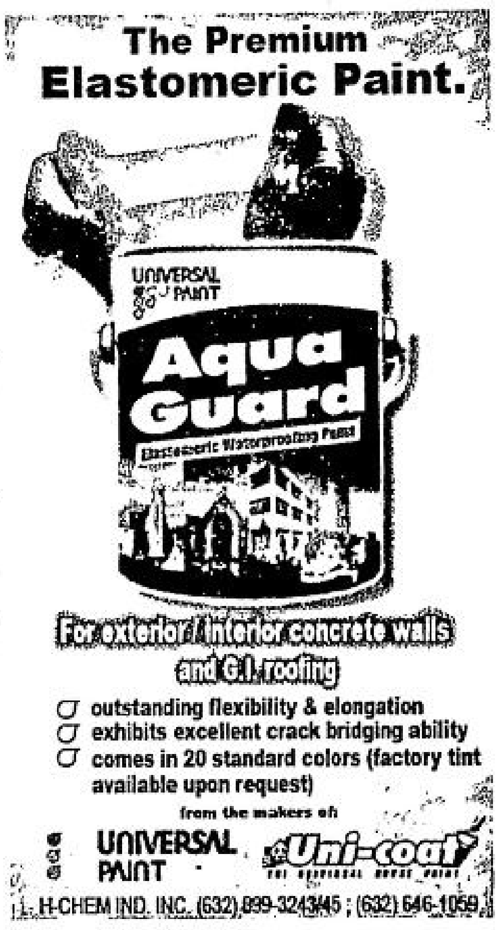

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G.A. Tower II
The rich man's lifestyle made affordable

Nowadays, everyone is looking forward to a warm, cozy place that he can go home to everyday after a hard day at work. A place where he has more time to enjoy in peace the company of family or friends... or simply have that coveted quiet time for himself.

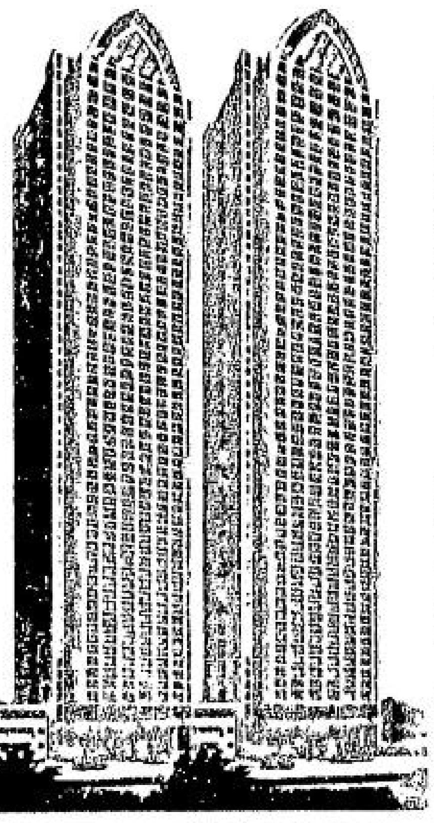
Globe Asiatique Realty Holdings Corp.'s latest project, G.A. Tower II, the twin half of G.A. Tower I, is just that and more. Soon to rise alongside its identical twin, G.A. Tower II located along EDSA in Mandaluyong City, is just a stone's throw away from the Boni Avenue MRT Station. The 30-storey condominium building is every workingman's dream home, promising the enviable condo lifestyle at very affordable cost.

Perfect location and amenities

The strategic location of the G.A. Twin Tower makes it a prime choice for employees working in Makati, Pasig, Mandaluyong or even those located along the entire stretch of the MRT Station. Just a few minutes away are commercial centers, hospitals, schools and churches.

Future residents will surely marvel at the various features and amenities found in the residential project. At the second floor is a swimming pool, a gym or spa and several fast food establishments. Both G.A. Towers are fitted with standard security and safety features.

Just like the first tower, G.A. Tower II has 600 residential units and 48 penthouse suites, all fully finished, to choose from. Each unit has two toilet and bath, a living and dining area, a kitchen, plus a loft. The units are designed along practical lines, fully utilizing space without compromising form and functionality. And for residents who need some help in their monthly amortization, the units' design allows bed-spacing or even renting-out to co-workers.



Easy financing scheme

Globe Asiatique has come up with a unique financing scheme, so easy on the pocket of every middle-income employee. The buyer shall pay the 20% equity over a period of 42 months at 0% interest. Monthly payment for the equity can go for as low as P9,523.81 only. The remaining 80% of the cost of the unit is a guaranteed loan from the Pag-IBIG Fund, whereby the monthly amortization to Pag-IBIG will start only upon completion of the project and turnover of the unit.

City life at its best

G.A. Tower II is a promise fulfilled. With its prime location, affordable and easy payment scheme, plus the amenities and lifestyle of any high-end condominium building, G.A. Tower II shall soon become the most-sought after address for every workingman in the area who values time spent with family or himself.

Experience city living at its best at very affordable price and easy payment terms. Visit the G.A. Tower Office and Showroom at 79 EDSA cor Boni Avenue, Mandaluyong City (southbound, before Bonifacio Motors) or call telephone number: 534-7777.

ADVT

NATURAL and man-made cohabiting wonderfully in Greenbelt commercial area

DINERS and strollers alike relax in an outdoor setting of a mall . Likewise, the modern water feature provides the cool respite and break from a lot of shopping.

The unmaking of a mall

By Pinky B. Cruz

COMMENTARY

I AM most fascinated with how the lifestyle of a typical Pinoy has evolved throughout the recent years. Pause for a moment. Think of a certain day or week without even visiting the mall in town. Unthinkable! Mall rats that we are, it almost feels like doing one's compulsory penance when most of the malls close their doors.

All for the mall

I remember back in college when the mall was such a novelty. I would cut classes to catch a glimpse of the store displays, the expanse of space luring willing gallivants, sip coffee and talk the school blues away. I was so happy with the colorful lifestyle it offered. Even summers didn't seem to bother me anymore, thanks to the air-conditioned environment the mall freely provided! My movie-going life became interesting as well.

I graduated not long after and before I knew it, I was doing my business deals inside the welcoming establishment of genial familiarity and comfort.

Dawn of urban dreams

I am a self-confessed, mall-obsessive urban professional. As a designer, though, I have been pining over the sorry state of their designs being so disconnected with their environment, and the mammoth warehouse-like appearance did not help at all. Manila is dotted with urban disappointing sights. And as if these were not enough, the skyrocketing billboards compete in the mad chaos.

But I am never too hasty to judge, for progress always has a price tag. Consoled, and relieved, over the recent developments that have a semblance of consciousness in it (if not the conscience!), I commend the efforts of the heroic few who fearlessly incorporated promenades and parks for adults, and lots of playground for children, meditative spaces (we are so hungry for!) and even restaurants that open up to the outdoors.

> The sprawl of stores and restaurants along with residences attest to the integrated lifestyles people lead

A recently opened mall has an integrated *palengke* (market) that is surely shaping the buying and vending trend here in Manila. And now, even our cultural senses that have lain dormant are fast catching up in proximity with museums and chapels. This is the maturity that I am happy just to be a part of. Yes, we are getting crowded, but the good news is, there is such a hodgepodge of creative options for everyone to maintain a semblance of a sane life.

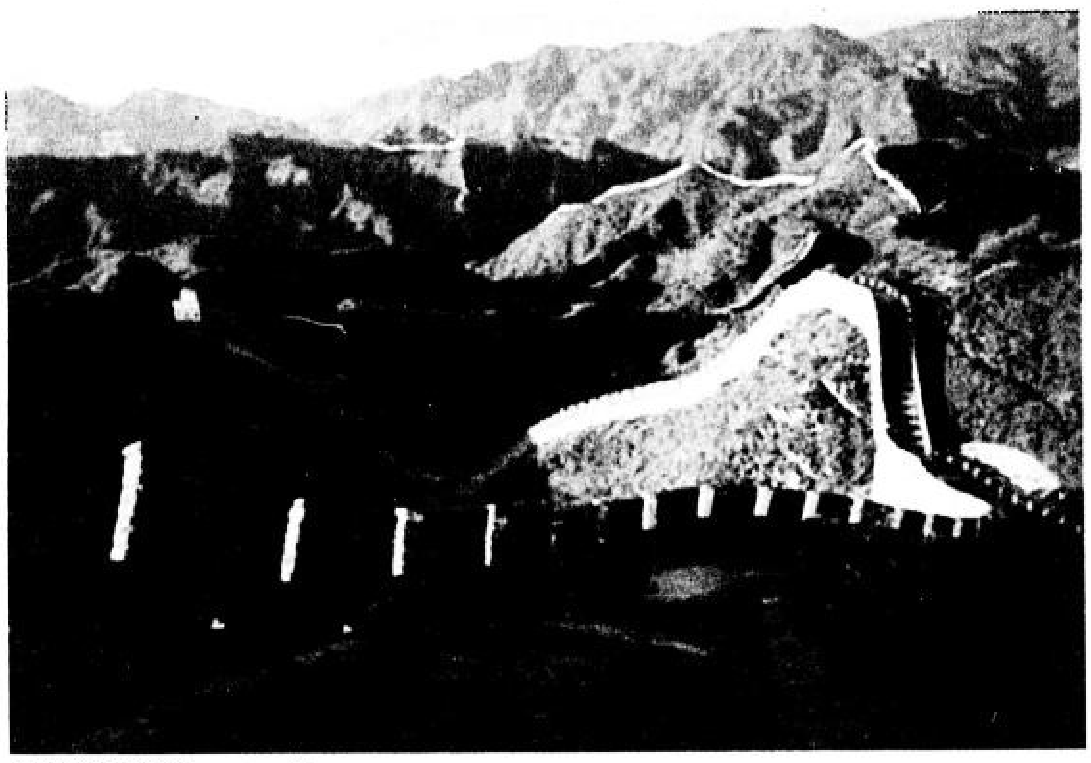
Malls of the new millennium

In 2001 PricewaterhouseCoopers found that 20 percent of American malls—as many as 400 enclosed shopping centers—could reach economic obsolescence by 2004. Designers in California like Rosenberg and Meyer try to include zones for different consumer behaviors, such as big-box shopping or teenage loitering. They figured to dismantle the La Eagle Rock Mall and designed a curvilinear streetscape adjacent to the subdivisions nearby, much like what we have in Greenbelt now.

The sprawl of retail stores and restaurants comingling with residences and commercial buildings just attest to the integrated lifestyles urban people lead now. I see the facelifts that are taking place in the most prominent malls nowadays. Whether these were spurred by competition or upgrading consumer's shopping experience, or both, there is no doubt that we, the public, would benefit from this. The changes actualized are reflections of a changing society as well. So, talk about unmaking a mall ... or is it the mall making us? God forbid!

* * *

For comments or suggestions, please e-mail me at pinkycruz@creativepost.com.ph.



THE WORLD'S longest wall

All walled in

AMAZING STRUCTURES

IT has always been said that the Great Wall of China is so distinct it is the only man-made structure which can be seen by astronauts who looked back on earth from the moon.

And who doesn't know about the longest wall in the world?

With a main line measuring 3,460 kilometers plus 3,530 km of branches and spurs, the Great Wall of China has a total measurement of 6,990 km.

Longest construction time

The world's longest wall probably also has the longest construction time in the history of mankind with a construction period of over 2,000 years. Stone, wood, grass and earth were the original materials used.

During the Ming Dynasty, kilns were set up along the wall to make bricks which were then transported by men, donkeys and mules. Even goats were not spared. A brick was tied to the goat's head before it was led up the mountain.

The wall goes from Shanhaiguan Pass in the east near Bo Hai (Gulf of Bohai) to Jisayuguan Pass (in modern Gansu province) in the west.

For protection

The Chinese used the Great Wall to protect agriculture and themselves from the Huns and other warrior tribes from the north. More than 10,000 watchtowers and beacon towers were built on it to house troops and weapons and where signals could be sent in case enemies were seen approaching.

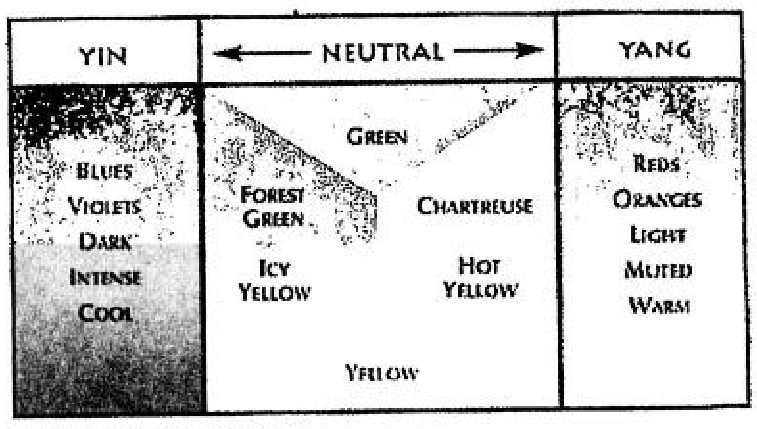
The Great Wall's length is so unfathomable that if the bricks and stones that went into its construction were used to build a big wall one meter thick and five meters high, it would encircle the earth more than once. *Dianne M. Villafuerte*

Living in color

By Dianne M. Villafuerte

FENG SHUI

MAKING our homes and workplaces visually pleasing is a must, at least for most of us. It need not be an expensive piece of decor or fixture, sometimes colors can do the trick. What's important is having a more appealing and desirable place to live and work in. Feng shui experts have their own opinion on what color schemes are more favorable for your homes.



YIN and yang color chart

Zaihong Shen, feng shui practitioner and author of Feng Shui, Harmonizing Your Inner and Outer Space, writes that colors are divided into two categories—yin or yang—depending on their effects on humans. In theory, cool colors are considered yin colors while warm colors are considered yang. Primary blue, for instance, is perceived to be a yin color because it has a calming effect while primary red falls under the yang category since it represents fire and stimulation.

More favorable colors

Here are Shen's recommendations for what colors are more favorable to use in every room of the house:

- **Living room.** Home owners can actually have any color scheme in the living room, whatever they deem pleasing for them.
- **Dining room.** Slightly warm colors such as salmon pink, peach, apricot and blush are strongly recommended in the dining room. These are light and bright colors that are believed to stimulate without overwhelming the appetite. Black, on the other hand, is discouraged.
- **Kitchen.** White is the most preferred since it is associated with cleanliness and compatible with the kitchen's fire element. Light warm colors can also be used. Blue and gray, however, are not advisable since these are thought to dull the appetite. Hot reds and oranges are also discouraged since these are also fire colors and believed to create too much heat in the kitchen.
- **Bedroom.** Powder blue, mauve, beige and other muted or neutral colors are most favorable for the bedroom since these encourage sleep and have calming, revitalizing effects. Red, orange and other bright and highly saturated colors are thought to make sleeping difficult and cause excitement so these are discouraged from being used in the bedroom.
- **Den/office/library.** Green is perceived by the Chinese as an ideal color for the study most especially because it soothes the eyes. Bright reds, oranges and golds, on the other hand, are considered distracting colors and, therefore, are not recommended.
- **Bathroom.** Like in the kitchen, white is also the most ideal color for the bathroom. Bathroom accents in the color of tangerine, chartreuse or other warm colors are also suggested since these add warmth to the the bathroom's yin environment. A bathroom with an all-black theme, or in any other dark shade such as navy blue, burgundy, forest green or steel gray, is strongly discouraged.

While feng shui has its own theory on what colors are favorable and what are not, colors have their different effects on different people. Orange, for instance, may make one nauseous or dizzy while it may also inspire another to think creatively. The bottom line is, know which colors are most agreeable to you and your home and use these to your advantage.

Premium brand in doors, windows products now in RP

METICULOUSLY assembled Pella windows provide timeless elegance and enduring beauty.

From page B2-1

Pella uses factory-controlled processes to manufacture over 50 different combinations of windows and entry doors that are immediately ready to install.

From here, Pella uses all its technologies that have made the company famous the world over [Pella leads in doors and windows technology in the United States, holding more than 100 product and design patents.].

Among these technologies are standard clear insulating glass, energy-saving argon-filled panes, "Low-E" glass helps reduce ultraviolet rays and other harmful rays that contribute to fading one's home interiors. There is a variety of glazing options to reduce glare, increase energy savings and even reduce outside noise (of up to 80 percent).

"Pella even offers an interesting option called Hurricaneshield Glazing that can withstand an impact equivalent to a baseball traveling at the speed of sound," assures Focus Global store manager Aileen Araquel.

Built to last

"Pella's windows and doors are built to last using kiln-dried solid wood, guaranteed against shrinking, swelling and splitting. Every component is treated for added protection against the elements and tested under the harshest conditions to ensure perfect performance for many years to come," reveals Claveria.

On the outside, Pella windows are aluminum-cladded, not only for protection against harsh elements but also for hassle-free maintenance.

Claveria informs that the glass in Pella windows, patio doors, entry doors and skylights is guaranteed for 20 years [Pella will ship replacement glass or sash or door panels here].

"This will give our clients idea on the quality of workmanship Pella gives on all its products. Pella factory-tests every standard venting ProLine window for air infiltration—if it doesn't pass, it doesn't ship," she explains.

Claveria assures that with the Pella brand now available in the country, Filipino home builders constructing, remodeling or simply replacing a window or door have one of the best brands available to them.

PELLA entry doors are built to meet the same quality standards for which Pella windows and patio doors are famous

Doc shares expertise with tsunami victims

By Charles E. Buban

DURING her week-long assessment visit to Sri Lanka, Dr. Miguel also went to several disaster zones to extend medical assistance.

APART from ensuring their health condition, children may need to be treated for posttraumatic stress disorder.

DR. Miguel saw firsthand the extent of damage.

WHEN DR. Editha Miguel went to the Sri Lankan towns of Matara and Galle last Dec. 30, she realized that next to food and medical aid, the tsunami-stricken residents also needed to be organized and empowered with knowledge and skills to effectively address the problems besetting them.

The 50-year-old program director of Agape Rural (Health) Program (ARP) explains that it should be clear to these people that they are not simply passive recipients or wholly dependent on the knowledge of outside experts.

"In any community stricken by a disaster, the people cannot be dependent forever on outside help. Considering the many areas affected, the limited supply and number of volunteers, the affected people should be mobilized to efficiently manage the aid given to them," she says.

Extent of damage

Miguel was invited by the Global Hope Network International, a humanitarian aid organization, to assess the situation in Matara and Galle.

While there from Dec. 30 to Jan. 4, she saw firsthand the extent of the damage.

"The destruction stretches as far as the eye can see and the survivors need all the help they can get to keep their communities safe from any outbreak of infectious diseases. This is where ARP volunteers will be needed most," says Miguel.

She returns to the two towns this week with nine other ARP volunteers to begin training of around 50 Sinhalese in distribution management and posttraumatic counseling.

From Sri Lanka, the group will proceed to Medan, Indonesia, to perform a similar task.

Hero for health

The ARP has been recognized here and abroad for its successful campaigns in bringing health care services and facilities to rural, and mostly remote, communities in the country and even as far as China and Nepal.

"By involving the community, its people are encouraged to articulate their problems, to learn, to acquire, and at the same time, they are better able to be active and be responsible," explains Miguel.

Miguel was one of the five recipients of the Heroes for Health Award given by the Department of Health and Pfizer Philippines last December.

She said the P500,000 she received as part of the award is now funding new projects in the different areas served by ARP, including nutrition classes, literacy program for 150 people, water and toilet systems and natural farming.

Holistic program

The ARP was formed in 1986 by the Rural Ministry of the Campus Crusade for Christ in the Philippines.

Miguel, a University of the Philippines College of Medicine graduate who took up residency in Internal Medicine at the UP-PGH, was one of the eight volunteer doctors in the program's maiden year.

Miguel says the ARP carries out a holistic community-based development program where volunteers not only attend to the medical and dental needs of the residents but also organize and train local health workers and community leaders.

"These people are trained how to identify, prioritize and address the health needs of their respective community, including problems in nutrition, water and sanitation and prevention of diseases endemic in rural areas such as malaria and diarrhea," Miguel says.

Local leaders are also taught basic leadership skills including planning, monitoring, evaluation and networking.

Since 1986, some 50,000 residents of these largely rural and poor communities have received medical attention and were taught about health promotion and disease prevention.

Home alone

By Rafael R. Castillo, MD

MEDICAL FILES

TRAVELING with the whole brood is a good family activity which promotes bonding. However, there are instances when a parent or both parents have to travel without the children, such as in work-related trips. This may be a healthy thing to do from time to time, as long as it's well-planned. In fact, child psychologists even advise parents to travel without their children occasionally, to develop independence and trust between parents and children.

But when not well planned, traveling without the children can cause a lot of anxiety and other problems to both parents and children.

Small children not only develop a transient separation anxiety each time their parents travel, but may also eventually develop a long-term feeling of abandonment which may have a lasting psychological impact that could burden them throughout their adult life.

"It always pains me to leave my children even just for a day or two," says Elizabeth Soliday Naui, a professor at the Far Eastern University, whose research projects require that she go out of town from time to time.

She's blessed to have loyal and dependable *yayas* who care for her children like they were their own. She would never leave home unless she has the assurance that her children have been adequately psychologically prepared to prevent any separation anxiety.

Frequent separation

Separation anxiety is an expected component of the behavioral growth of children. Even in babies 8 months old, serious signs of distress may be seen if they're left with someone else. It can peak when the child reaches 2 to 4 years and can be a big problem even in older children.

Although it is not an alarming behavior and should not be considered a psychological problem by itself, parents should not disregard it as perfectly normal.

Parents should realize that frequent separation with their parents can be also psychologically unsettling for the children, and parents should make an effort to understand what their children are going through. If the children are adequately prepared psychologically, unnecessary emotional turmoil can be prevented.

Caregivers

Minimizing separation anxiety is not the only concern why parents have to set aside ample time to prepare before they depart for a trip. They have to make sure that whoever was requested to take care of the children must know important information they need just in case something goes wrong.

This is especially true if the appointed caregiver is new and is not familiar with the children's medical history, the household and the neighborhood.

These information can come in handy: tips for comforting the children or "child-proofing" measures, rules with strangers, layout of the house and neighborhood, what to do in case of a fire (including fire escapes and where to meet outside), the children's medical history notebook and their doctor's contact numbers.

If the children are taking medications, the parents must make sure there is a sufficient supply. History of allergies to drugs and food should also be known by the caregiver.

Checking on the kids

While the parents are away, they should call or e-mail once daily or every other day at least to check on everything. Calling on the phone is better so they can talk to their children. Just hearing their parent's voice can be consoling and reassuring to the children.

But calling several times a day may also upset the children, and can also ruin the parent's trip.

Coming back is equally challenging to the parents as leaving them. Some children may be angry or may even ignore their parents.

Parents should use the same kind of communication, reassurance and discipline as they did before the trip. Experts advise that parents immediately express how much they missed their children, show signs of affection like hugging or kissing; but they should not push it if the children are still angry or indifferent.

Traveling without the children can yield pleasant or unpleasant outcomes, depending on how the parent handles it. Simple planning and preparation can address all concerns that can ensure a happy turnout.

The physics of Chinese tea

(Third of four parts)

EUREKA!

Queena N. Lee-Chua

FOR THE PAST two weeks, we have been discussing interactive activities for grade school and high school from the book "Math and Science Across Cultures" (Maurice Bazin, Modesto Tamez, and the Exploratorium Teacher Institute). Interested readers can visit the National Book Development Board inside the UP campus, Diliman, Quezon City (tel. no. 929-3878).

This week we look at the physics of tea boiling and drinking, which was developed by Curt Gabrielson.

Tea was first recorded to have been a popular drink in southern China in 50 B.C., and became so ubiquitous as a health and spiritual drink that in the eighth century, the scholar Lu Yu wrote a book called the "Ch'a Ching" (The Classic of Tea), where he described growing the plant, using the proper cups, reaping the benefits and so on.

When explorers from the West visited China, tea was one of the prizes they brought back with them. By the early 1700s, tea was famous in England, and clipper ships loaded with Chinese tea raced to reach its shores. Many of the tea ships carried no other cargo because the captains would not allow anything that might spoil the tea.

Porcelain to make teacups was also made in China in the third century. Porcelain came from deposits of petuntse (china stone, like feldspar) and kaolin (white china clay). Trade in porcelain was strong, especially centuries later when it reached Europe, where the cups and plates at the time were made of coarse earthenware. Today, porcelain and tea have become synonymous all over the world.

Conduction

Fill a ceramic teacup with boiling water to about half an inch below the brim and then quickly cover the cup with a lid. After a few seconds, use your fingers (carefully!) to feel different parts of the cup. Touch the sides, bottom, handle and lid. Where are the hottest and coolest areas?

The hottest areas on the cup are where most heat is being lost. Cooler areas are those that lose less heat. At the top of the cup, the water does not touch the lid, so there's a pocket of air between the water and the lid. The heat must pass through that air pocket and the lid before reaching your fingers.

However, at the sides, the heat only has to pass through the cup to reach you. The transfer of heat through a material is conduction. When the lid is on the cup, most of the heat leaving the water escapes through conduction.

Air is less efficient than the cup at transferring heat, so less heat is transferred to the lid than to the walls of the cup. According to the Second Law of Thermodynamics, heat flows spontaneously from high temperatures to low, and does not do so spontaneously in the reverse direction.

Convection

When the water has cooled, refill the cup with fresh hot water and put the lid on top. Wait a few minutes so the steam doesn't burn your hand. Carefully remove the lid and check the temperature by holding your fingers near the cup, but not touching it. Again, where is the most heat?

The hottest area is right above the cup. Air expands as it gets warmer. Since its molecules move farther apart, warm air becomes less dense than cool air. Gravity pulls down harder on the denser, cooler air, and the warmer air rises.

This process, called convection, is what happens here. In the teacup, the water heats the air just above it, and that air rises. The rising hot air is replaced by cooler air coming from the sides, which in turn quickly becomes heated and rises. When you see water vapor rising, it is convection at work.

Radiation

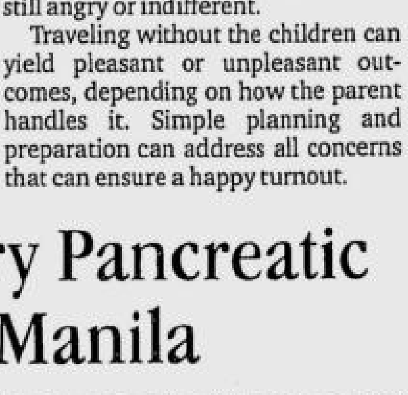
Another method of heat transfer is radiation. If you put your fingers near the sides of the cup, you feel radiated heat. All hot things (like the sun or a radiator) transfer heat by radiation.

Heat from the teacup is conducted by the ceramic and the air and convected by the moving air. But in radiation, air is not needed. Although the difference between the two processes is not too clear in the case of our teacup, rest assured that the radiated heat from the side of the cup does not need air for heat transfer. This is similar to infrared radiation from the sun, which does not require air; the sun heats the earth through empty space.

So what exactly is heat? A form of energy, heat is the level of agitation and internal excitation of the molecules that make up a substance. Water is hot when the molecules bounce against one another rapidly. It gets colder when those same molecules slow down. Temperature is the measure of this agitation, as measured precisely by a thermometer, or estimated by your fingers.

(Next week: Arrows and rockets around the world)

Asian Society of Hepatobiliary Pancreatic Surgery to hold congress in Manila



HILVANO

SOME 50 renowned foreign experts who deal with diseases of the liver, hepatobiliary tree and pancreas will gather in Manila on Feb. 10 for the 8th congress of the Asian Society of Hepatobiliary Pancreatic Surgery. This was announced by Dr. Serafin Hilvano, president of the congress.

About 400 foreign delegates from all over the Asia-Pacific region are expected to attend the four-day congress, slated at the Edsa Shangri-La Hotel.

Special highlights include a valedictory address by founding president Prof. Tadahiro Takada, a special lecture by Dr. Hilvano and interesting plenary sessions on liver and pancreatic cancers, gall bladder and biliary diseases as well as current issues in liver transplant surgery.

Notable foreign speakers include professors Hans Begerof of Germany, Jacques Belghiti of France, Henry Pitt of the United States and Hiroshi Shimada of Japan.

For further details on registration and scientific sessions, please contact the secretariat, Division of Hepatonbiliary Pancreatic Surgery, Department of Surgery, UP PGH, at telefax 524-0311 and trunkline 521-8450 local 2264 or e-mail uphpb@yahoo.com.

Nonstimulant ADHD medication now available in RP

ATOMOXETINE HCl, a nonstimulant treatment for attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), is now available in the Philippines. It is the first and only nonstimulant approved for the treatment of ADHD in children, adolescents and adults.

"Until recently, stimulants were the most effective medication for ADHD. With Atomoxetine HCl, we are now able to offer parents and their children an alternative to stimulant treatment," said Sandeep Gupta, president and general manager of Eli Lilly (Philippines) Inc.

The US Food and Drug Administration approved Atomoxetine HCl in November 2002 for the treatment of ADHD. The medication is also currently approved in the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico, Argentina and other Latin American countries.

It is not known precisely how Atomoxetine HCl reduces ADHD symptoms, but scientists believe it works by blocking or slowing the reabsorption of norepinephrine, a chemical in the brain considered important in regulating attention, impulsivity and activity levels. This keeps more norepinphrine at work in the spaces between neurons in the brain.

ADHD is a medical condition that first appears in childhood. It affects three to seven percent of school-age children and manifests itself in levels of attention, concentration, activity, distractibility and impulsivity inappropriate to the child's age.

Many children with the disorder will continue to have symptoms in adulthood, although the hyperactivity tends to decrease with age.

Atomoxetine HCl is a prescription drug and individuals should consult their physicians for further information regarding ADHD and its treatment.

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SCIENCE/HEALTH

E-mail: pr_science_health@inquirer.com.ph

Editor **Cesar D. Mangawang**
Assistant Editor **Stella O. Gonzales**

Text us your feedback: inquirer hea name/city/message to 2207 (Globe) or 283 (Smart)

Meningococcemia: An ancient disease

By Frank Cimatu
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Meningococcemia is an old disease. According to Dr. Luningning Villa, spokesperson of the Department of Health's infectious disease unit, the bacteria *Neisseria meningitidis* was first described in the 1880s.

"It's an ancient disease," Villa said.

N. meningitidis is found only in humans. Up to 10 percent of adolescents and adults are asymptomatic transient carriers of the bacteria, meaning, they show no symptoms of the disease.

The bacteria reside in the nasopharynx, located above the palate and behind the nose.

When someone who has the bacteria sneezes at you, or kisses you on the lips, or drinks from your cup or straw, or does something where respiratory droplets or secretions from the nasopharynx are transmitted, then you have a chance of acquiring meningococcemia.

Up to 10 days

Most have immunity to the bacteria. In rare instances, estimated by the US Centers for Disease Control at less than one percent of cases, the bacteria leave the nasopharynx and enter the bloodstream. They then spread to many organs and, in half of the cases, enter the cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) and cause meningococcemia.

The incubation period of the disease is usually from three to four days, but can extend up to 10 days.

That is why laboratory diagnosis is confirmed by the presence of the bacteria in the CSF.

After a short period, from an hour to two days when the patient complains of fever and muscle aches, more severe symptoms can occur.

Map-like rashes

The patient will have continuous fever, chills, vomiting and weakness. The fast-multiplying bacteria in the bloodstream would remain unchecked by the immune system and this would result in vasculitis, an inflammation of the blood vessels.

Vasculitis is manifested by small bleeding spots seen on the skin, or what doctors call "rashes like the map of the Philippines."

Within hours, the "map" grows as the internal organs bleed. Then large areas of skin, muscle, and internal organs die from lack of blood and oxygen.

TOOTS SOBERANO

VINCENT CABREZA

BAGUIO'S vegetable vendors (top photo) have started selling face masks, too. Soldiers (above) spray disinfectant in vegetable stalls in the public market, which has been identified as the prime source of the meningococcemia infection in the country's summer capital.

Immediate treatment of suspected meningococcemia begins with antibiotics, but even with quick diagnosis and treatment, the patient can still die.

The World Health Organization pegs the case fatality rate at between five and 15 percent, but in the case of Baguio, the fatality rate is 50 percent.

Most cases, according to the WHO, are under 5 years, but in Baguio, the median age is 16 years.

Classifications

There are four serotypes (classifications) of meningococcemia. In the United States, the most common are serotypes B and C.

In previous cases of meningococcemia in Baguio, the serotype was B. Which was why during a press conference last November, the Baguio health department said the current serotype was B.

Serotype B has no available vaccine and people were advised against vaccination.

It was later discovered that the meningococcemia serotype affecting in Baguio was serotype A. This is the serotype often associated with outbreaks.

Villa said it was very possible for serotypes to change in a particular area.

"Maybe the residents have become immune to a certain serotype but not to the other," Villa said.

'Close contacts'

The communicability of the bacteria is generally limited to the household of the patient; the CDC says only about four percent of households would have secondary cases.

This was the case of a Baguio patient who was diagnosed to have only allergy but later died of meningococcemia. A relative and two other acquaintances died days later.

According to Villa, "close contacts" would include those who live in the same household as well as those who share the same dormitory, military barracks and hotel in the seven days preceding the onset of the illness of the patient.

Medical staff directly exposed to respiratory discharges are also considered close contacts. (A child of a Baguio nurse died last December).

Are you taking the right medicine?

By Vincent Cabreza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CIPROFLOXACIN
RIFAM
℞
℞
Rifampicin

THE GOVERNMENT has been giving out antibiotic drugs to Baguio market vendors since December. EV ESPIRITU

BAGUIO CITY—The city government's decision to saturate denizens of the public market here with antibiotics as a safeguard against meningococcemia infection has prompted many residents to self-medicate.

But are they taking the right medicine?

Dr. Antonio Bautista, Cordillera spokesperson of the Department of Health, said many residents have been taking the wrong dose of rifampicin and ciprofloxacin.

These are the antibiotic drugs recommended by the World Health Organization for strengthening the immune system.

Bautista said people have been taking 500-mg tablets of rifampicin, when the right dosage is 600 mg.

He said misuse of the drugs could cause side effects.

Worse, the wrong dosage may acclimatize the body to the antibiotics, making them ineffective should a person become infected by meningococcemia.

Brisk business

Since November, drugstores here have been doing brisk business selling generic or branded rifampicin or ciprofloxacin.

Drugstores sell 200-mg and 300-mg tablets of rifampicin and ciprofloxacin without requiring a doctor's prescription.

A top branded ciprofloxacin tablet costs up to P77; a 300-mg tablet of rifampicin costs P22.20.

Pharmacists have recommended other types of antibiotics like cipromet, which costs P40.25 a tablet, and Zalvos, which costs P57.75.

Costly vaccine

Also in great demand today are meningococcemia vaccines.

A shot that can cure most strains of meningococcemia costs P2,500, said Bautista. But a Baguio drugstore has been selling the vaccine for P15,000 a vial.

Bautista said most of these drugs are not a 100-percent guarantee against the disease because one in 10 people who take them may still be unprotected from the disease for one reason or another.

With reports from Donna Demetillo and EV Espiritu

Know no fear

DISCOVER

Massie Santos Ballon

ONE of the CNN reports on the earthquake and subsequent tsunamis that have affected so many in South Asia these last few weeks mentions the fact that many of the dead were found with their hands raised, as if to ward off the water rushing toward them.

In the Jan. 6 issue of Nature, researchers led by neurologists Antonio Damasio from the University of Iowa and Ralph Adolphs from the California Institute of Technology discuss the case of a woman identified only as S.M., a woman in her late 30s with bilateral amygdala damage, which prevents her from recognizing fear.

The amygdala looks like an almond embedded in the medial temporal lobes of the brain.

Previous studies suggest that the amygdala is involved in expressing emotions such as fear or pleasure, and that depression and phobias may be due to the amygdala being damaged in some way, though no one is quite sure how that happens.

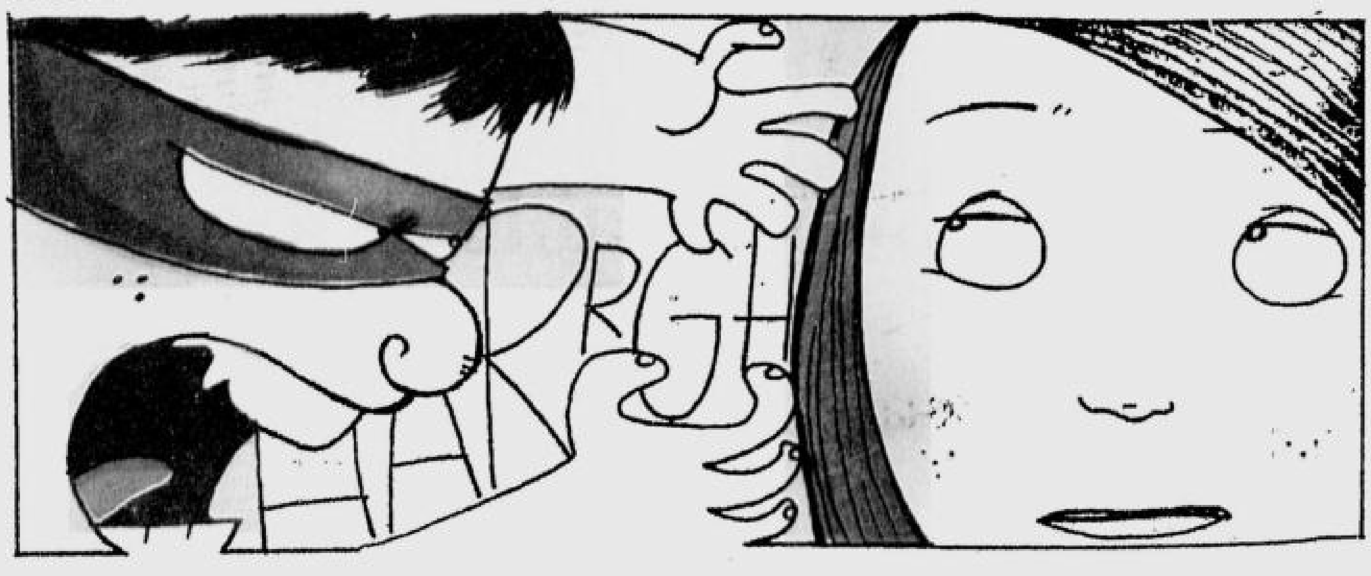
Very trusting

In S.M.'s case, her damaged amygdala means she can't respond to the appearance of fear the way others would, and that she is very trusting. (For purposes of this study, S.M.'s faith in the goodness of others is not examined.)

The researchers also note that S.M. can't look at another person's eyes unless explicitly told to, and thus can't process the emotional information provided there. She can however, distinguish fear when she hears it in a person's voice.

For Damasio et al.'s paper, S.M. was tested with 30 women of similar age with no neurological problems, and 13 women who had unilateral amygdala damage.

One of the experiments involved S.M. and 18 women from the control group, and had two parts.



In the first half of the experiment, S.M. and 10 of the women from the control group looked at several faces and to identify, as they had done previously, the emotions displayed by each image such as surprise, anger, joy and fear, and whether or not the faces belonged to men or women.

Looking in the eyes

Damasio et al. found that all the participants had similar results when asked to identify the image's gender.

When it came to identifying the emotions on the images' faces, however, S.M. only recognized fear half the time compared to the other women.

But when she was told to look at the eyes of the image, she did just as well as the rest of the women.

The second half of the experiment involved S.M. and the other eight women, but this time they only looked at images on a screen. Each participant's eye movements were tracked as they observed the images on the screen.

The results showed that while the other participants looked mostly at the eyes and occasionally at the mouths of the images, S.M.'s gaze was fixed on the image's nose most of the time, as if she could not bring her eyes up to see those of the images'.

Hearing, not seeing fear

Given S.M.'s situation, this is how she might have reacted had she been on the beach in Phuket two weeks ago: Maybe she would have wondered why the waters receded, and then maybe she would have been mesmerized by the wall of water that slowly rose and moved toward the shore. She would have seen the people running out of the water and heading inland, but she would have ran only because she heard, rather than saw, the fear in their voices.

In the 10 years since she's been working with Damasio et al., the researchers note that she still has not learned to recognize fear in faces, and does not appear to have improved her defective social judgments.

It is reassuring to note that Damasio et al. do not mention any incident that S.M.'s trusting nature has been taken advantage of.

Processing information

The researchers noted that the results of their experiments verify the results of other studies which show that the amygdala plays a role in allowing a person to process information gained from looking at the eye region of people's faces.

As there has yet to be a full understanding of why a damaged amygdala can affect one's ability to recognize emotions, Damasio et al. suggest that, based on their work with S.M., telling people who have what they call "defective emotion perception" such as autism to look directly at something might improve their ability to recognize emotions and expressions.

E-mail the author at massie@massie.com.

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ÉLAN
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Editor Marge C. Enriquez
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Copy Editor **Emmie G. Velarde**
Creative Director **Mark Inducil**
Graphic Artist **Genie L. Lagman**
Editorial Prod. Asst. **Kathryn L. Reyes**
E-mail: pr_elan@inquirer.com.ph
pdi_elan@inquirer.com.ph

After the tsunami, a global village

By Marge C. Enriquez

IN THE past weeks, the foreign print and broadcast media have focused on a positive outcome of the tsunami tragedy: collaboration building kinship, that is to say, it has made of the world one global village.

CNN's coverage has been heart-wrenching. In one special, it showed images of people in the stock market, and governments observing a minute of silence, a prayer that the departed souls might quickly reach their destination. It showed recipients of donations tearfully accepting checks and letters, and children elsewhere saving up cents so they could give from their own little pockets, too. If you stayed glued to CNN all day, you'd probably send a check to Sri Lanka, Indonesia or Thailand yourself.

On the other hand, the BBC has been more detached in its approach. In the spirit of classic journalism, features focus on the tsunami's impact on many levels. Its coverage, in the very least, makes one think about the utmost importance of disaster preparedness.

Rung of reluctance

Foreign newspapers and wires have been reporting on celebrity charity. In the New York Times, **Julie Salamon** explains its relevance: "Even at times of overwhelming calamity, generosity doesn't come naturally to everyone. Most people start at the bottom … the rung of reluctance, because inertia is a moral as well as a physical tendency."

In other words, it takes time—and often a lot of arm twisting—for the more fortunate to respond to even something as urgent as saving lives. Celebrity charity, plus its hype, is truly useful.

Just like in the jungle, where plants and animals coexist, each contributing something to an environment that sustains all life

Explains Salamon: "Celebrities may not exactly be the prophets of our age," explains Salamon (oh, but this society is saturated with pop culture and treats celebrities like gods). "However, they have a strong grip on people's imaginations and on their wallets."

Well, if the local media splashed across pages and screens images of **Kris Aquino** writing out checks, expect a huge collection from the Philippines.

Away from the glare of the media, religious and spiritual groups have been providing an important service, especially to the victims and families. They've been giving counseling and comfort to the grief-stricken.

Money with soul

The deluge of donations and expression of sympathy from the wealthier countries to the affected eas has been unprecedented. In her book, "The Soul of Money," professional fund raiser **Lynne Twist** explains that this is a natural phenomenon. Although competition in Nature exists, she says, the true law of survival is, invariably, cooperation. We've just been conditioned to believe that the world thrives on competition. On the contrary, just like in the jungle, plants and animals coexist, each contributing something to a balanced environment that sustains all life.

This isn't just a phenomenon, the more fortunate giving to the less fortunate. The media has emphasized the dreams and visions of both the donors and the victims of building a self-sustaining society on the ruins. Everybody should then be contributing financial resources, skills, prayers and passion for the singular goal—a better world.

Twist points out that philanthropy and service have become an expression of man's inextricable link with one another. Committed philanthropists and donors can invest not only wealth but also noble intentions.

When the aim is pure, the giver feels happy and fulfilled. Giving boosts the spirit.

Explaining the karma philosophy behind philanthropy, Twist writes further: "In directing the flow of money to [the donors'] highest commitments, they invest money with soul, and embrace and express sufficiency. I call this 'real' investment and it creates no recipient. It is an opportunity for us as a human family to partner with one another with whatever resources are part of our life. In that context, financial investors experience that they have enough and that they have the capacity, the longing and the ability to share."

Long-term commitment

World political leaders underscored that helping the tsunami's victim nations wasn't just a stopgap measure, that the aid should be long-term. Speaking to BBC, the Indian High Commissioner expressed his concern that the support might stop when the tragedy no longer gets media attention.

This started me thinking about the Philippine situation. After the super typhoons that devastated parts of Southern Luzon, the country was united in giving donations and relief goods. Then the public was distracted: FPJ's death, coup rumors, the worsening quality of life. Many ended up just shaking their heads and sliding back to their original and main preoccupation—themselves.

Astrologer **Georgina Solina** observes that Filipinos are not very grounded. For them, she says, life is one big ephemeral ride, thus the famous *ningas cogon* mentality. They get worked up on something, and after a while they lose interest. She notes that Filipinos thus have a propensity for "fleeting pleasures." This is why media maintains that topics on "fleeting pleasures" sell.

By now, Filipinos must have been desensitized by the images of the poor people in Quezon or the tsunami victims in Banda Aceh. In time, the tsunami updates on television will just become entertainment and background noise while the viewer is getting dandied or dolled up for the next to-do. Lest we forget, marketers and retailers are thinking of the next hype for their products and services while other societies are still reeling from Nature's wrath, wanting in such basics as food and shelter.

As situations become more volatile on one side, conspicuous consumption will intensify. However, there is a growing trend in matters of substance, with people trying to make sense of the events.

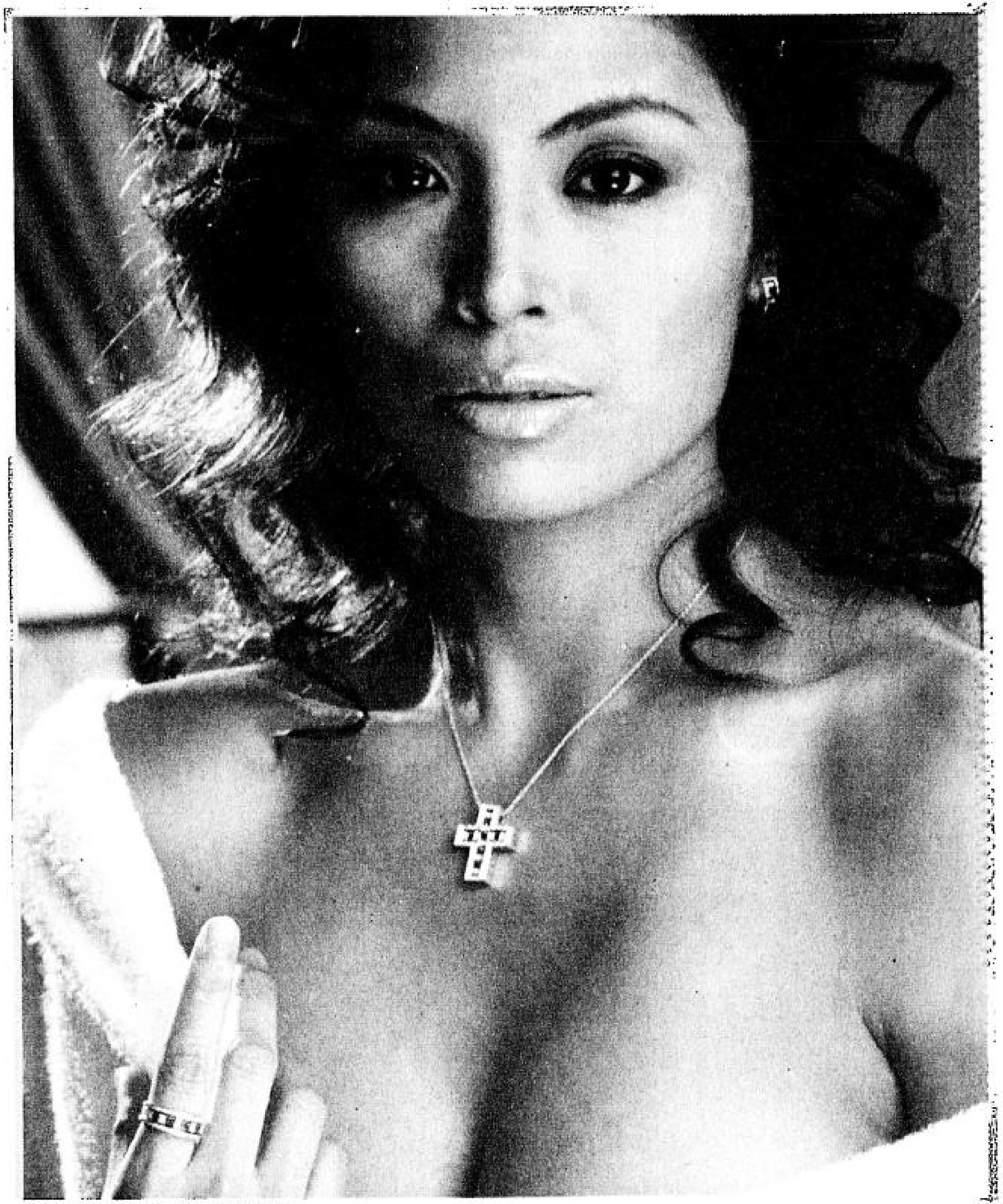
Eclectic mix

ÉLAN has adopted a "very left of center" attitude with its contrasting combination of the profound and the profane. How disparate matters of the soul and the body coexist in a few pages can baffle readers accustomed to mainstream glitz and pop culture reportage, or those who insist on the traditional paradigm. This issue, for instance, is an odd mix—cars, cosmetics, culture and jewelry.

Our pictorial concept for Damiani jewelry is a classic: the sensuality of objects is desire, emphasized by skin. The images of **Wig Tysmans**, whose forte is figurative studies, underscore this desirability. The pictures combine sensual fantasy and realism.

On ÉLAN's quirkiness, people ask, "Why?"

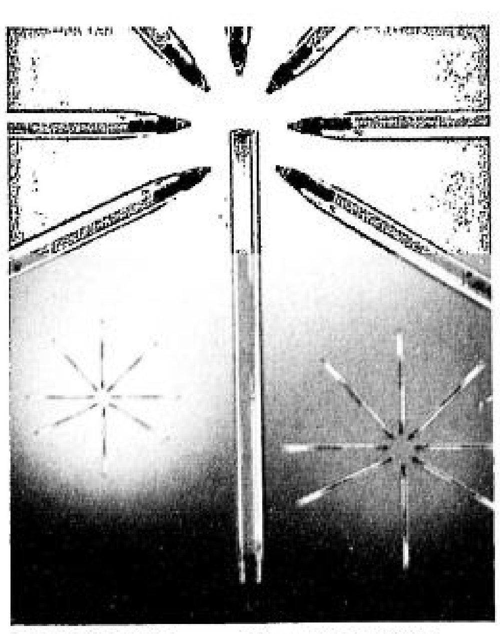
My cliché answer: "Because."



WHAT'S INSIDE

"I AM always committed to respecting the enthralling feeling of love that the jewel must communicate," says Silvia Grassi Damiani, who heads the design team of the family-owned Italian jewelry brand. Damiani has established its presence in Manila. For our shoot with Wig Tysmans (*see back page*), model Gorgette Peña exudes the refinement and subtle sexiness of the jewelry. Makeup expert Patrick Rosas and his team interpret the 2005 look with bouncy curls for movement and a metallic look ala Beyoncé.

Plan for change

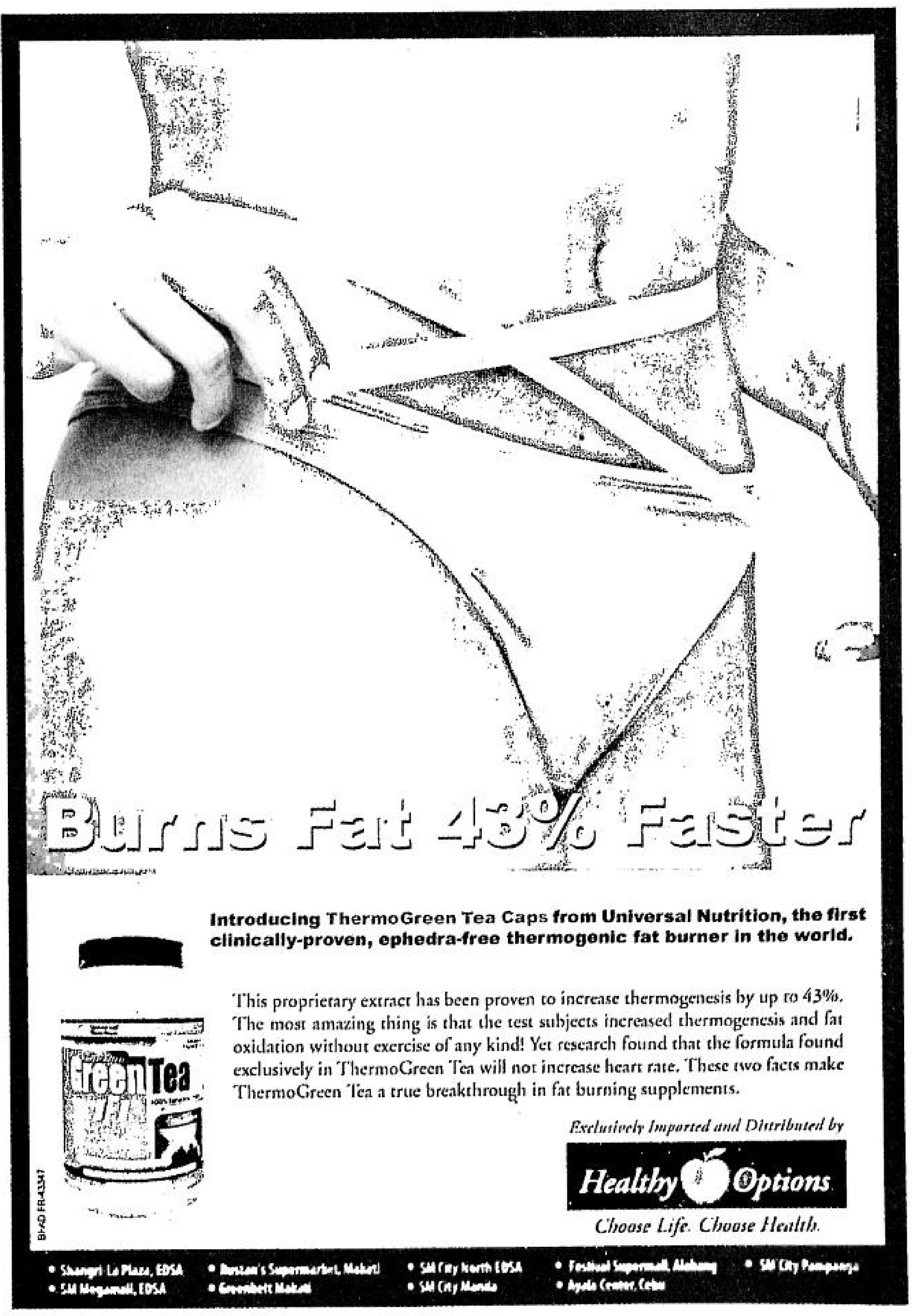


TO MONITOR your self-progress, write down your thoughts and behavior everyday and think of how to do better the next day.

WE HAVE been empowered by many persuasions—family, education, position. Over the years, these influences have also formed our attitudes and beliefs. Power is energy with meaning, but any behavior that is done repeatedly tends to lose its intent, and so power dissipates. The power to change in the new year is necessary, if we want a better quality of life.

We have energy inside us, but when the crux falters and self-expression is challenged, we neglect these internal resources. The threat is we start to live superficially, no longer enterprising but passive.

Belief in the self comes from within. When we embark on change, we become the heroes in our journey. It may help to note down our resolutions and to keep a journal so we can learn to articulate our feelings. Bic, the brand for writing instruments, and National Book Store recommend: Create a strategy for change, convince yourself that the idea can be executed; then put all your enthusiasm into doing it.



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Car talk

By Mark J. Macapagal
Contributor

This is a car with a single devotion — the Mitsubishi Eclipse, and only those that came out from 1996 to 1999

I HEM and haw when people, particularly women, ask why men get addicted to their cars. For me, it's just one of those things—if you understand it, no words are needed; if you don't, no explanation will suffice. In a very real way, it's all about "spark." The same way that someone can capture you with a glance from across a room, a car can instantly entrance.

The other day, I spoke to Sidney Ang, president of Eclipseworx, a Philippine car club with a single devotion: the Mitsubishi Eclipse, and only those that came out from 1996 to 1999. I was looking to learn something about the car: it's actually the psyche of people like this that bears understanding. I'm sure we all know someone like Sidney. The car may be different but the obsession is the same.

The Eclipse is a two-door coupe that attained iconic status after Paul Walker drove it in the movie, "The Fast and the Furious" (it was the green car). It has a very distinct, curvy shape and still looks like a car ahead of its time today, let alone in 1996. The Eclipse was not released in mass quantity in this country. Mitsubishi once brought in about 100 of them in the late '90s but that's it. So if an Eclipse is not part of that 100, it was imported.

Car-crazy

Sidney was more than willing to reel off the various important engine figures, but, as I told him then, things like car specifications are boring to most people. For the greater part, the tendency is to view cars functionally. Will this car be able to accommodate my family? Will this car cost me a ton of gas? Will this car help me get more girls? Even guys who want a car with great engine performance will probably judge from the actual feel of driving the car, as against reading statistic comparisons. From what I understood, the Eclipse has one of the best engines Mitsubishi ever made. People initially bought it for its distinctive style but soon found out it was a monster under the hood and that just increased its already considerable cult following.

Sidney knows exactly what it means to be a car-crazy guy. He's top member of the elite in the very small performance car community in the Philippines. When it comes to being a car legend in this small pond, he knows the pros, the cons, the fallacies, the misconceptions and those things you wouldn't have thought about in a million years.

"Cars, they're just like jewelry for men, cars are blingblings," Sidney begins. "I've been in the jewelry business for years and I can tell you that this... (he forms shapes of rings and necklaces in the air for women) is just the same as this... (he drives an imaginary steering wheel) for men."

It's misconception that guys get cars to impress girls. When they hang out and talk about their cars with their car hoods popped open, they're not trying to dazzle the girls because they know that girls don't care about anything under car hoods. No, Sidney insists, whether a guy admits it or not, when he improves on his car, he's trying to impress other guys. You're chasing that respect and admiration you get from onlookers after the nice modification you just added. You revel in the fact that the guys looking at your car wish that they had what you have.

Girls will often like a nice car but that's just an added benefit. He compares it to women and jewelry. A man might like that a pair of earrings makes his woman look more stunning but he cares very little about the actual piece of jewelry. He's not going to study and appraise it. Only women do that, and women like it that they impress other women with their jewelry this way.

Another common question: How one can indulge in a car fetish when gas prices and car prices are rising astronomically? Sidney candidly admits that indeed, it is a problem. That's probably why members of the car scene are slowly dwindling. To join any car club, you would at least need to own the car that the club is formed around and then you'll be modifying it. You could easily spend more than P1 million. But he and the other aficionados simply accept that as the cost of their hobby. If you can't afford it, you can't and they understand that they themselves can't do half of what they want to do without working for some serious cash.

THE MITSUBISHI Eclipse Spyder

And no, it's not really a chick magnet. Sidney relates that most women get bored of the car talk and prefer to hang out away from gasoline stations. The girlfriend who dumped her car-loving boyfriend told me that, although she actually felt sexy when riding in her ex-boyfriend's souped up car, she got too scared when he drove fast. Sidney says that is a common reaction among many girls who think that it's fun to joyride, they don't really understand the speed involved.

Sightings

This club is quite active in trying to find other people who share their passion for the Eclipse. You can contact Sidney anytime on his cellphone (0922 811-0496) or visit the website: www.eclipseworx.com. The group actually once saw another Eclipse on the road and chased it, waved at the driver and invited him to their weekly meetings.

Anyone who's into cars can catch their weekly meetings. Once a week, they meet in a place where they can drink and hang right by their cars, usually in a gas station like Total in Fort Bonifacio or 90 Proof in Ortigas. Most bars and restaurants are far from the parking lot so that eliminates many places from being a meet spot.

Their meetings are quite a sight—some of the best-looking cars in the Philippines, all in a row. It's jaw-dropping and head-turning to the uninitiated and still a source of great pleasure for veterans. The guys themselves are a great resource for car problems since, as Sidney explains, if you have any car trouble, 90 percent of the time you'll find someone whose had the same thing happen to him already.

In the end though, Sidney has a remarkable understanding of the reality of his chosen passion. He knows that it's extravagant; it's just a testosterone boost and that only a tiny audience that can truly appreciate the effort he puts into his car.

And that, I think, is the biggest misconception that people have—that guys like Sidney are clueless. Truthfully, they are very clued in to the good and the bad of your passion. Because that's really what happens when you have a true dedication to something, be it a sport, a person or a sleek, eye-catching, seven-year-old car.

BOOK REVIEW

A fine line between fame and infamy

By Cherish Garcia-Hernandez
Contributor

Stories about famous people used to be about their achievements. Not anymore

The Importance of Being Famous
Behind the Scenes of the
Celebrity-Industrial Complex
By Maureen Orth
372 pp. Henry Holt & Company

IN "The Importance of Being Famous," Maureen Orth, a longtime writer for Vanity Fair, the magazine of starlet-crowning covers, power-player lists, glossy true-crime stories, exclusive (but widely publicized) parties and very close Hollywood ties, promises to reveal the workings of what she calls "the celebrity-industrial complex." This being the mystifying series of schemes by which celebrities are created, managed, promoted and discarded.

Throughout the book, Orth repeatedly insists that celebrity is ruining America. "Obsession with star power," she intones, "is producing more and more ordinary people who have inordinate desires to identify with celebrity. Along with acquired situational narcissism, there is now a phenomenon, seriously discussed, called celebrity worship syndrome. A scale has been developed to measure the intensity with which the syndrome's victims over-identify with celebrities. The thwarted ambitions of these celebrity junkies can backfire on all of us, as the frenzied race to be powerful or famous drives some people into dysfunction."

Case in point, Filipino-American Andrew Cunanan, who shot Gianni Versace and, later, himself to gain worldwide attention and immortality. Sadly, Cunanan, who was also the subject of Orth's first book, "Vulgar Favors," seems to have succeeded in his Machiavellian journey.

Covering Elvis' death

Orth, who once upon a time had to convince her editors at Newsweek that Elvis' death was worth covering, has not only interviewed the decade's biggest celebrities; she has also witnessed contemporary society's most ridiculous and tasteless moments first hand. "The Importance of Being Famous," mostly a collection of her pieces from Vanity Fair, is a loaded and memorable journey among the biggest scandals of the '90s and some of the decade's most compelling personalities. At the end of each piece, Orth offers an update. Considering the subject matter Orth often deals with, her steadiness, acumen and standpoint is a gift that few journalists possess.

Orth has a keen eye for subtleties and is very detail-oriented. For some reason, her best pieces seem to be those that portray women. For example, Tina Turner, talking about being beaten by her then husband, Ike, defining her life in one phrase: "I knew I would never be given my freedom. I would have to take it."

Or the final piece on Dame Margot Fonteyn, a graceful coda of sincere veneration. An update reveals that Fonteyn's husband had a young mistress who committed suicide on the day he died. Orth did not include this fact in her original article.

"I could not bear to hurt Margot Fonteyn, who to me was a paragon of dignity and fortitude. I am not sure that I would be able to keep information like that hidden today."

The male subjects range from heads of government like Vladimir Putin, to the easier-to-spot celebrity such as Karl Lagerfeld, or the simply indefinable, such as Mohamed Al Fayed of Harrods, father of the ill-fated Dodi, whose obsession with security (a personal protection team of 38) gives him an air, of mystery and menace. Woody Allen, too, comes in for brutal scrutiny in his sexual relationship with—and later, marriage to—one of his and Mia Farrow's adopted daughters, Soon-Yi.

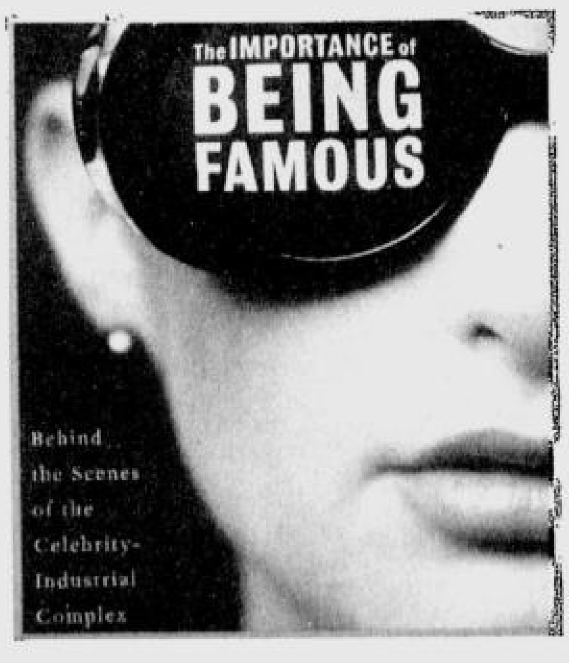
Quality journalism

"The Importance of Being Famous" does not really resolve the cult of celebrity any further than the information Orth provides on her subjects. She attempts to categorize them ("Reinventions," "Political Theatre," "Little Gods"), as well as elaborations interspersed between the sections of interviews. But the profiles stand on their own. This book is a great reminder of the tradition of providing journalism that in its length of words and breadth of detail is the exact opposite of the calculated sound bite world of celebrity culture that we know today. Power hungry and tragic subjects, some of whom are icons like Judy Garland and Madonna, portray themselves as victims to hold the limelight. Little dramas crafted for public consumption are conjured and eaten up by the media and public and the result is the celebrity obsessed society we have today. There is a fine line between infamy and fame in the millennium.

A long time ago, stories about famous people were still mostly about their achievements. Today fame is more about self-promotion rather than talent. It is the ability to get noticed and continuously stay in the public eye.

One does not have to look to the shores of America to see this happening. Just take a look at Manila's society and entertainment pages, glossy magazines and TV shows? Who do we see? Who do we talk about and why do we talk about them? What have they really achieved aside from looking good?

Orth's collection proves that quality journalism still has a chance on the side of accuracy; that, with enough tenacity and time, the shamelessness of Public Relations can be cast aside to show a person not as he or she might wish to be displayed, but rather as close to reality as possible. Intelligently written, widely entertaining, Orth's tome is not only witty, probing and candid; it is an entertaining read that satisfies our hunger to enter the private lives of celebrity without feeding us contrived information.



The Okinawan way to health and longevity

By Dr. Martin Camara
Contributor

OKINAWA is a group of islands in the south of Japan that has the distinction of being home to the longest-living people in the world. The number of centenarians, or people over 100 years of age on the islands is exceptionally high. At least 34 out of every 100,000 Okinawans reach the age of 100; in the Western industrialized world, the number is only 10. In fact they have a saying that goes:

"At 70 you are merely a child ... at 80 you are barely an adult... and at 90, when you hear your friends inviting you to enter Heaven's door ... you tell them to wait until you are 100! "

Not only do people live longer there; they also remain healthier longer, incredibly escaping chronic diseases associated with aging, including dementia, coronary heart disease, stroke and cancer.

> 'At 70 you are merely a child ... at 80, barely an adult ... and at 90, when your friends inviting you to enter heaven's door ... you tell them to wait until you are 100!'

This amazing statistical fact prompted a Japanese-American research team to try to uncover the genetic and lifestyle factors that might explain it. The team consisted of Dr. Bradley J. Willcox of the Pacific Health Research Institute at the University of Hawaii, a former geriatrics fellow at Harvard Medical School; his twin brother, Dr. D. Craig Willcox, medical anthropologist at Okinawa Prefectural University; and Dr. Makoto Suzuki, Okinawa International University gerontologist. They investigated over 600 centenarians to uncover clues to their outstanding health and long lives. They attributed Okinawan longevity to genetics, diet, exercise and local attitudes.

Diet

The Okinawans consciously choose their foods in ways that their ancestors have done for generations.

This means filling their plate with nutrient-dense, calorie-starved foods such as soy, fruits, vegetables, sprouts, broth-based soups, seaweed, *konnyaku* (a plant jelly), sweet potatoes, lean poultry and fish, beans, grains and yogurt. Green, leafy vegetables are rich in folic acid, and fish such as tuna, mackerel and salmon are rich in vitamin B6 and B12. These lower levels of homocysteine decrease the chances of cardiovascular disease such as heart attacks and strokes. Soybeans and other pulses, linseed and broccoli, contain natural phyto-estrogen that reduce the risk of breast and prostrate cancer. New studies likewise show that women who have a high intake of soy-flavonoids will experience less menopausal complaints.

This also means infrequent consumption of breads, cheese, oil, nuts, meats and sweets.

And it also means observing three key principles: *kuten gwa* ("little portions"), *hara hachi bu* (eat until 80 percent full only) and *nuchi gusui* (eating as though food had healing power). Eating in excess makes one feel slow and sluggish and overloads the system. The Okinawans recommend eating no more than two handfuls per meal.

According to the brothers Willcox, people need to eat only two to three pounds of food a day to feel comfortably full. If this amount consists of bulky but low-calorie foods, that's eating healthy.

Broth-based soups are characteristic of Okinawan diets. *Miso, soba* (buckwheat noodle), *tsumire* (fish croquette), *nankwa nbushi*(pumpkin, almost a stew), kelp or seafood broth are staples. Served as a first course, they are filling and nutritious and naturally curb hunger for higher-caloric entrees.

Exercise

Okiñawans also get plenty of exercise through physical labor, martial arts, dance and walking. Contemplative exercises such as gardening and strolling are particularly popular. Rather than running long distances and lifting heavy weights, the Japanese go the gentle route—tai chi, yoga and gardening.

Integrated health care

The researchers give credit to traditional and alternative remedies that are a regular part of the Okinawans' healthcare delivery system. Eastern and Western approaches meet in the use of herbal tonics and acupuncture alongside conventional medicine.

Aging

Okinawans hardly have any fear of growing old. They enter old age with Zen-like stoicism. According to a survey conducted by the Japan Centre for Intercultural Communications concludes: "In general, they feel content, safe and financially secure. [The older ones] wish not to be a burden to their children, and to undertake new projects and travel to far away places. They have a relaxed and positive attitude towards life."

Akiro Kurasawa's film "Dreams" captures this outlook. An old Japanese man in a remote fishing village is speaking to a younger man about life. He says: "Isn't that the purpose of life ... to live long, to be of service to others, then to be thanked for it."

Community bonds

The Okinawans and the Japanese people prepare for old age early. They develop hobbies and read up on the subject. They make a conscious effort to maintain *ikigai* (lust for life). They find stability in both family and social networks. Walking groups and cricket clubs are typical examples. They have aging down to a virtual art and sport. Basically, they believe that people are not meant to be alone. Therefore, the more meaningful contact one has with other human beings, the longer and better their lives will be.

For more information, read "The Okinawa Diet Plan" by Drs Willcox, Willcox and Suzuki. Or email author at drmartin@intercare-centers.com.

Guess how Spidey did it?

TOBEY Maguire got fit for his "Spiderman" role with Pilates. Carrie Ann Moss worked with a Pilates instructor in the "Matrix" trilogy. Pilates, a complete exercise program for strength and flexibility, is being taught by fitness pioneer Vivian Zapanta.

Instructors' courses for Stott Pilates will start in January. No need to travel to Canada or the States to get training and certification.

The Zapanta Pilates Studio is located at the Ground Floor-B, Tiffany Place, 156 L.P. Leviste St., Salcedo Village, Makati City. For details, contact (0917) 8440944, or e-mail studio@vivianzapanta.com or vivianzapanta@hotmail.com.

Admiring Lao's 'Clouds Thinking'

By Leovino Ma. Garcia
Contributor

TO PAINT is to think in action, to act with thought.

The Chinese believe painting is a highly spiritual exercise since it strives to evoke the mystery of the universe. This can be achieved only by recreating in the artwork the vital energy animating the universe.

> The artist's unspoken quest seems to coincide with the inner essence or substance of things—and for this he digs deep into his Chinese roots... 'Clouds Thinking'

In "Clouds Thinking" at Avellana Art Gallery, artist Lao Lianben once more surprises us by putting this conviction into practice. His unspoken quest seems to coincide with the inner essence or substance of things, to harmonize the relations among them. In a sense, he digs deep into his Chinese roots.

For the Chinese, the inner energy or force of things emerges against a background of Emptiness or Nothingness. It is around this Nothingness that Chinese aesthetics revolves. It is present not only in painting but also in poetry, music, and theater. It is palpable in t'ai-chi and acupuncture.

Lao's challenge is to create Nothingness on the canvas—a Nothingness that is, at the same time, a Fullness. It is this Nothingness-Fullness that will vex, fascinate, delight whoever bestows on himself/herself the exquisite pleasure of laying eyes on the paintings.

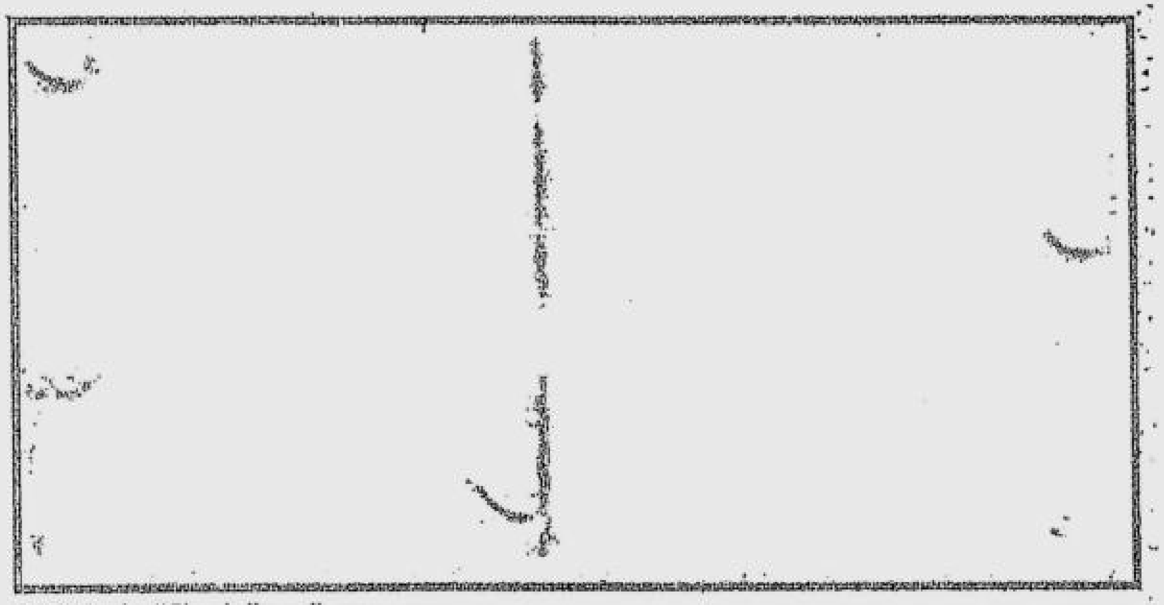
Emptiness

Of course, one must correctly interpret this Emptiness. It is not an inert presence. It is active and dynamic. According to "The Book of Changes," it is the milieu where things circulate and the place where they breathe. It is the space where changes occur.

A cloud manifests this Emptiness. The cloud provides the transition point that links the visible world to the invisible universe. As transition point, a cloud breaks rigid opposition between things (for instance, between mountain and water) to bring about their reciprocal becoming. The mountain can turn into water and the water into the mountain. Emptiness revealed in a cloud enables one to understand the transformation of things and oneself into Fullness.

Art and living

In painting as thinking in action, the artist transforms himself. By painting, he proposes a true way of living. He brings things together in harmony. In this way, art and the art of living become one.



SEND in the "Clouds," acrylic on canvas

At a time when the art world seems to suffer from inertia, Albert Avellana perks it up by thinking out of the box. He successfully convinces people to wake up early for a unique breakfast opening of an art exhibit. What can be more unthinkable than an opening on Monday, at 9:30 in the morning? Surprisingly, many showed up to admire (and immediately acquire) the works in "Clouds Thinking"—an essential and necessary luxury to start one's week.

"Clouds Thinking" is on view at Avellana Art Gallery, A-19, 2680 F.B.Harrison St., between Edsa Extension and Libertad St., opposite Gideon Academy, Pasay City, tel. 833-8357/fax 832-8365.

For comments, email the author at lgarcia@ateneo.edu.

EMMA Estrada, proponent of flamenco, says the dance itself is rhythm—and magic.

Ole!

I FIRST saw Emma Estrada more than a decade ago in the class of the maestro Guillermo Gomez at the then Casa de Epaña in Bel-Air, Makati. Anyone who watched her would admire her sinuousness and powerful stage presence called *duende,* which the poet Goethe described as "a mysterious power that everybody feels, but that no philosopher has explained."

"Emma is a natural," remarked the affable Gomez. There was something inexplicable in her dancing quality that invariably caught the eye.

Years later, *bailaora*-cum-philanthropist-party hostess Tereret Liboro asked her to perform solos for a *peña* (soirée) at her home. Emma was so cool. She needed only a quick stretch before she danced. Her playfulness and earnest expression gave her a sensuality found wanting in many Filipinas attempting flamenco.

In hindsight, Emma admitted that she needed to acquire more technique at the time, despite the fabled *duende* or soulful quality that motivated her dancing. Nobody noticed it, because everyone was just bowled over by her serpentine movements.

Culture shock

Emma had dance training in ballet, jazz and modern dance at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. After taking a few psychology courses in college at Assumption Convent, she studied language, arts and history at the Universidad de Complutense de Madrid. Her pursuit of dance was sidelined by marriage and motherhood.

She returned to Spain to polish her Spanish and also to accompany her daughter, Tanya Garcia, who went to a boarding school in Madrid. Tanya recalls that once, when they stayed at a friend's house, a brother and sister performed the Sevillanas, a popular dance for couples which has erotic undertones despite the mathematical precision of the choreography. The dancers' heads and shoulders were thrust back, their eyes blazing as their bodies wreathed in amorous confrontation. Emma was entranced.

She then took up Sevillanas which was, by tradition, the entry point to the flamenco world.

In Manila, Emma was an active board member of the Casa de España, an organization that promoted Spanish culture and camaraderie among the Spanish community and aficionados of Spanish culture. The Casa was also home to Spanish dance classes taught by Gomez and visiting teachers such as Perla Primicias and Jane Orendain. However, due to lack of funds, the Casa's activities fizzled and the place was converted into a Spanish restaurant.

Emma then returned to Madrid to study flamenco at the prestigious Estudio Amor de Dios. Any newcomer who immerses herself in flamenco would be stymied because it is a world in itself, with its own vocabulary, repertory and conventions. Flamenco is divided into *palos*, different styles and songs, in rhythms that are difficult to follow, especially for foreigners. The challenge is coordinating the footwork, upper body movements and expression—which all have distinctive beats—and fit them into a *compas* or a measure of 12 counts. "Ole!" (accent on the first syllable) is saved for the end, when the dancer has accomplished all requirements within the *compas* and peak at the *duende* moment.

"I realized that flamenco equals rhythm," says Emma. "You've got to know where the accent falls. You can't put your hands or feet just anywhere or at just any point of the music."

Sink or swim

Her first class was the *bulerias*, the most frenzied and complicated song and dance. In the *bulerias*, she says, it is difficult to ascertain where the pulse is going next. In flamenco, the magic is achieved if the dancer can stay within the rules amid the manic and palpitating music.

Emma's teacher, Tino Lozano, was unsympathetic. "In this school, you either sink or swim," Lozano is said to have told her. Neither did her classmates help her make sense of the flamenco lexicon and gestural interpretations. She was left on her own to analyze the rhythms and movements.

Every year, Emma takes classes in Spain under various teachers. One of her favorites is the famous La Tati whom Dance Magazine described as "perfection of flamenco sinuousness and upper-body carriage."

"Her style is Gypsy—very earthy," Emma says. "She was good for me because I was too balletic at first." Emma got the best from such mentors as Maria Magdalena for her footwork, Candela Sotto for *nuevo flamenco* or the infusion of jazz and tradition, Antonio Reyes, Carmela Greco. Whatever she learned from them, she incorporated into her evolving style.

"Dance is self-discovery," she explains. One realizes nuances of expression as each movement demands, or fathoms hidden aspects of the personality.

When she returned to Manila, Emma taught at Steps Dance Studio and at her home. She didn't have to worry about paying overhead expenses if classes were held at her residence. But the foot-stomping exercises that blew up a few light bulbs convinced her to look for a studio.

Love for the art

She was inspired to establish a center like the Casa de España. Jay Glorioso, a student of Emma's colleague, Cecile de Joya, offered her space at the SJG Building on Kalayaan, Makati. In three years, the Fundacion Centro Flamenco has held two recitals that were both attended by Manila's chic set.

The advance students perform regularly in corporate and society functions. Emma drives them to perfection, especially in developing an ear for the complex flamenco beats. She also focuses on the pulsating, explosive effect of challenging rhythms, crescendos and silences. She teaches students to make movement transitions seamless and to create dramatic impact from simple motions.

In keeping with the flamenco tradition, Emma trained musicians to accompany the dancers. She works with guitarists Ray Mansukhani, Miguel Nañana and Dave Endriga. Every weekend, she helps them develop an intuitive feel for the *bailoras'* movements.

"We get together to achieve our goals," she says. "Everybody is doing it all for the love of the art."

Marge C. Enriquez

Spanish-trained bailaora Clara Romana is teaching classes at the Fundacion Centro Flamenco, located at SJG Center, 8463 Rockwell Drive (Kalayaan Ave.) Makati City. Call 751-2243. Visit their web site at www.centroflamencophil.com.

Credits:
Photo by Larry Tamondong
Pictorial direction: Albert Avellana
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Spa and makeup school in one

Fragrance distributor expands to beauty retail school in one

By Harriet Ann Dy
Contributor

LUXURY takes on a wellness twist with the launch of My Beauty Hub (MBH), a multi-purpose vanity destination that is a training center, workshop venue, and beauty school in one. Part-spa, part-tea salon, and part-makeup school, MBH is an exclusive retail concept initiated by Luxasia Singapore, parent company of fragrance and cosmetics distributor Luxasia Philippines.

Known primarily as a fragrance distributor, this is the local company's first high-profile move away from traditional department store counters into stand-alone retail. The glossy 106 sq. m. shop in an equally tony 6750 Ayala address (tel. 752-7933 to 37) is home to premium lines like Shiseido Future Solution, Carita Progressif, By Terry makeup range, Vie skin products and ZIRH men's skin-care line.

"We feel that there is a strong trend towards prestige but highly-specialized niche brands," says Mia Nolasco-Cuenca, Luxasia Philippines general manager of the company's latest move. "And they are starting to take over mainstream brands."

The shift from indulgent vanity to a more introspective one is palpable. In 1991, Luxasia marked its local debut with the launch of Paloma Picasso's eponymous perfume in the early '90s. The nose knew; and not long after, it launched a whole slew of scents from Cacharel to Guy Laroche, from Bvlgari to Ralph Lauren.

Annual growth

"Filipinos really love to smell good," says Mia, who reports an average annual growth of 25 percent since the company started over a decade ago. And although perfumes have admittedly become more accessible, she says that prestige perfumes still account for approximately 60 percent of the total local sales. One of the exclusive lines is Serge Lutens' perfumes.

In the late '90s, the company began to expand to skin care. And while it distributed Lancome briefly in the same period, it wasn't until it started distributing Shiseido in 2001 and embarked on a regional lifestyle business strategy a year after, that it went full-blast in expanding its lifestyle business.

Today, the lifestyle category is a flourishing segment for the company. And MBH has been created to make sure they have their well-moisturized hands on a slice of the burgeoning beauty and wellness industry.

"Luxury creams are very in right now," says Mia. "They sell because innovations by skin-care companies are such that many have perfected the technology to supplement trends in cosmetic dermatology."

In short, well-concocted skin products have become the perfect accessory to maintain equally crafted "new" looks.

At MBH, shoppers—many of whom are sophisticates who are forever in search of the Next Big Beauty Thing—glide into the store requesting products that are mostly not advertised in mainstream fashion magazines. These include mostly European brands like Carita, Nuxe, the plant-based Phytomer and the marine-based Vie. Most are priced about 20 percent more per ml compared to similar big name brands.

Macho makeup

For metrosexuals, Jean Paul Gaultier has come up with Tout Beau Tout Propre, a skin-care and makeup line for men. Aside from traditional grooming products like deodorants and moisturizers, men can now buy lipsticks, eyeliners and even a bronzing powder designed for the well-coiffed macho.

Aside from Tout Beau, they can also select from ZIRH products, Nickel and Shiseido for Men.

It is interesting to note that several of the brands are owned, or have been bought by, the Japanese beauty giant from their original owners.

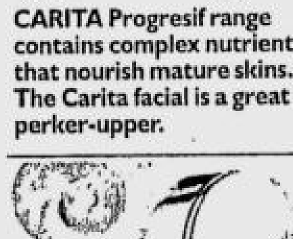
And while whitening and anti-aging products are still consistent top sellers, bronzing products have become popular in the last two years as well, thanks to J. Lo's and J. Aniston's perpetual glows.

"There is a big trend towards selectivity," observes Mia. "Companies are working more with exclusive concepts, and celebrity concepts have become important [marketing] tools."

At Luxasia Philippines, business growth has been averaging at 20 percent, brand for brand and on an annual basis.

Coming late next year to your MBH beauty counter: another exclusive London-based line, Molton Brown.

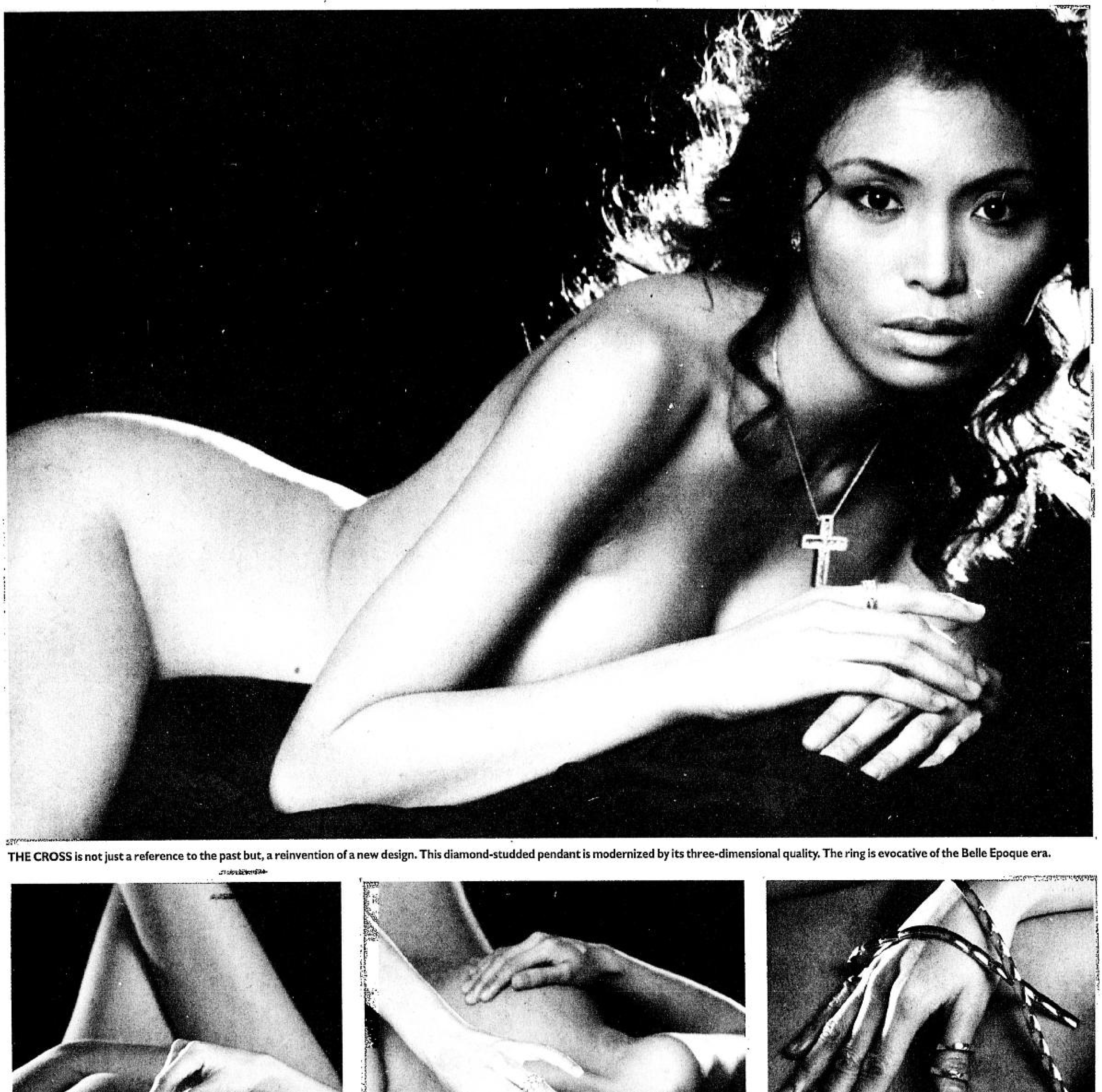
BEST BUYS



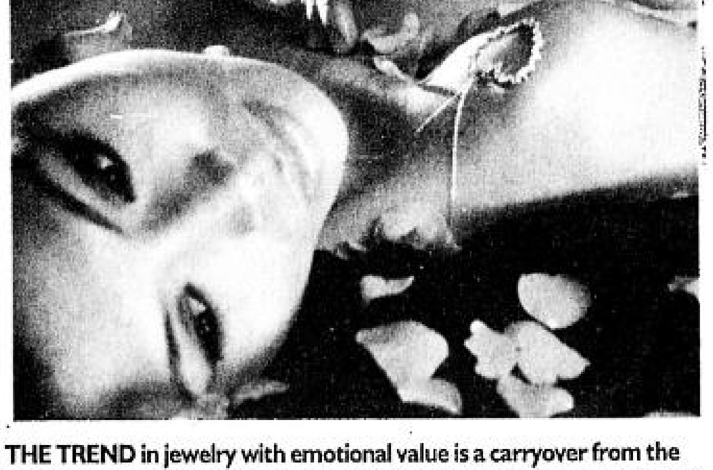
CARITA Progresif range contains complex nutrients that nourish mature skins. The Carita facial is a great perker-upper.

SERGE Lutens, former creative director for Shiseido, has an other-worldly line of fragrances.

MAKEUP maven Terry de Gunzburg has a professional makeup line. The Skin Enhancer can be worn alone or under the foundation.



THE CROSS is not just a reference to the past but, a reinvention of a new design. This diamond-studded pendant is modernized by its three-dimensional quality. The ring is evocative of the Belle Epoque era.



THE TREND in jewelry with emotional value is a carryover from the last decade. Like the cross and the flower, the heart is a popular motif.

THE GARLAND of the 18th century is reworked into a modern bib with repeated floral motifs with diamonds. The ring matches the bib.

D-SIDE is a streamlined line. Says Damiani, "Simplicity and class go hand in hand, and the art of the goldsmith is made aware of it."

Damiani for the world

Photos by Wig Tysmans
Pictorial direction by Antonio Salac Santos

BULLISH ABOUT establishing its presence in the international market, the Italian jewelry line Damiani, has been capitalizing on celebrity endorsers and sightings of actors and actresses wearing its blingblings to arouse public curiosity.

Sharon Stone is seen visiting the Damiani flagship store on Madison Avenue. Sophia Loren brandishes Damiani's Vulcana necklace and earrings at the reopening of La Scala. Isabella Rossellini wears Damiani in a social as she rubs elbows with Princess Caroline of Monaco. Kimora Lee Simmons and Jules Asner, hosts of the talk show "Life & Style," sport Damiani everyday on camera. At the premiere of "Troy" in Tokyo, actress Diane Kruger wears Damiani.

For 2005, Gwyneth Paltrow has a brush with ex-fiancé Brad Pitt, after Damiani named the Oscar-winning actress as its new image model. Pitt designs the D-Side, a postmodern line for Damiani (his now ex-wife Jennifer Aniston was also a spokesperson for the brand). Paltrow will be modeling some of the D-Side jewelry in Damiani's campaign.

Damiani isn't all celebrity hype, however. The company takes pride in its accomplishments, none the least of which is an unprecedented 18 awards from the Diamond International Awards, the Oscars of jewelry design.

The company has 15 designers creating its trademark simplicity with innovations. The pieces are handcrafted in Valenza, which a third-generation Damiani maintains is "the most important town in the world where everybody makes jewelry."

Biggest in Italy

CEO Guido Grassi Damiani claims that Damiani is the "the biggest jewelry line in the Italian market." Guido adds: "Research says the top-of-the-mind jewelry brand or the one with the most brand recall is Damiani."

Damiani was established in 1924 by his grandfather Enrico Damiani, who became a prominent goldsmith creating for Italy's richest families. Guido's father, Damiano took the designs a step further by introducing lunette effect settings to enhance the sparkle of the diamonds.

Today Guido runs the business with his sister Silvia, vice-president for communications. and public relations. She also develops the new collection and buys precious stones. His brother, Giorgio, is also vice-president of the Damiani Group and president of Damiani USA.

As in most luxury brands, the domestic market is still its strongest, accounting for 70 percent of the business. However, Damiani is making waves in the United States and Japan. Giorgio points out that Japanese celebrities don't borrow jewelry. They buy Damiani and flaunt them at the premieres.

The inspirations are drawn from nature and culture. The "Night of San Lorenzo" is a large diamond-studded star with a tail, a parure with diamonds of various carats. The Belle Epoque collection, particularly the cross, is popular in Asia. The "Chakra" is a choker in white gold with three balls of fire. The diamonds are set on prongs to give the illusion of squareness. The beauty is the flow of the diamonds and the gold. What sets Damiani apart is the refinement—the finishing, the setting of the stones and polishing—all done by the hands of expert craftsmen.

How Brad started

Although the bulk of Damiani's business are the artsy white gold-and-diamond, white-gold and ruby or sapphire and platinum pieces, the Brad Pitt-designed D-Side caters to a younger market. Pitt came across the award-winning design of a white-gold and diamond-encrusted crescent moon in the Damiani catalog. Wanting to see the real thing, he made an appointment to visit the store, saying he wanted a unique engagement ring for Aniston. Pitt collaborated with Damiani to create Promise, a solitaire ring in platinum and diamonds. They also partnered in designing the wedding bands, two concentric circles joined by pairs of diamonds in a crescent moon setting on the sides of the ring.

"Since he was active in design and ideas, I asked him, 'Why not work for us?'" Guido recalls. Since then Pitt, who obviously loves jewelry, has been sending Damiani his concepts. Pitt's designs are admired by Italian royalty and European celebrities.

Vanessa Figueroa of Vanafi was able to convince the Italians to invest in the Philippines. Guido plans to visit the country this year for the formal launch.

"Our mission is to make Damiani well-known worldwide," he says.

Marge C. Enriquez

Credits:
Tysmans' assistant: Tonette Jacinto
Model: Gorgette Nepomuceno- Peña
Hair and makeup: Patrick Rosas, Marlon Suarez, Noel Jimenez
Special thanks: Mariano Garchitorena, Peninsula Manila and Herbert Go, Tanghalang Pilipino

DAMIANI IS EXCLUSIVELY DISTRIBUTED BY VANAFI STORES AT THE PENINSULA MANILA, SILVER VAULT AT RUSTAN'S MAKATI AND SOON AT RUSTAN'S TOWER

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Editor **Pam Pastor**
Creative Director **Tim Yap**

style . urban living . pop culture . ment . recreation

to do what you want to do in Nami page E3

to be 'in' page D2

to write to Sandara Park page F3

to help the tsunami victims page G2

THE BRAD-JEN SPLIT

No... It Can't Be!!!

By Pepe Diokno

THE BIGGEST news since the blackout of 1901 is that Brad Pitt and Jennifer Aniston have split up. After seven years of being together and four years in matrimony, Achilles and that girl from "Friends" are no longer together. One big aww, people! Shed a tear.

Rumors have it that the split-up occurred after Jennifer suddenly realized Brad was 41 (must be the Botox. Funny, I always thought she was the older one in the relationship.) The *chismis* mills are working overtime. My favorite piece of gossip has Brad beating Jennifer up—with a brush and mirror (the only two things you'll find in their room.)

But through the gossip cloud, there is one thing I'm sure of: what's bad news for us is good news for one other famous couple, Mahal and Jimboy. Now they're the only couple in the world capable of producing genetically perfect children.

But honestly, I feel for Brad and Jennifer. If Zenida Seva says that FPJ's passing is a bad sign for Filipinos because he symbolized the common person, Brad and Jen's split must come as a bad omen for perfect people.

I can see it. Across the globe, beautiful people will cease to adorn shores. We'll have Fat Oprah and Jack Black making out in bikinis. Mini Me in a nudist beach. Keenan and Kel in 500 new seasons of their show. My Big, Fat Greek Wedding 20! MTV VJ Eddie Gil!

I am so sorry for those images.

Anyway... I must say I never like thinking of bad things. There's a silver lining everywhere, right? (Except my nipples) So, what is the rainbow after the storm?

Well, imagine other Mrs. Pitts:

Gwen Pitt. Cindy Pitt. Anna Nicole Pitt. Kitchie Pitt. Paris Pitt... Paris Pitt!

Yes, Brad should move on and hook up with Paris Hilton. (Imagine the perfect sex video.) Not only will he still be filthy rich, he'll still have perfect-looking kids. And the next time he goes and plays Achilles, he wouldn't have to go into intellectual discourse and stuff:

Brad: Achilles.

Paris: Gesundheit.

We shall have a proliferation of Pitts in the world!

But there is no reason to be worried about them, mothers. Even with the prospect of having another Mrs. Pitt, they say they will still be good friends. Cough-cough. This means they will still be doing each other's hair and makeup, plus Pilates workouts every week.

So, we all love our breakups, let's admit it. We eat them like Corn Flakes in the morning or Twix without milk! (Or *lechon*... mmm...) There's drama, and controversy... it's like a Channel 2 soap!

This is going to fill our TV screens for at least another eon. The only alternatives are the religious Christian channels on cable. (Amen.) So for now and the next few weeks, all eyes are on Bradifer™. It's a late paparazzi Christmas. It's an hour-long "Entertainment Tonight" segment. Even Boy Abunda's gonna be all over this.

So I wonder which local celebrity is gonna pull off a stunt like this, too? Kris...?

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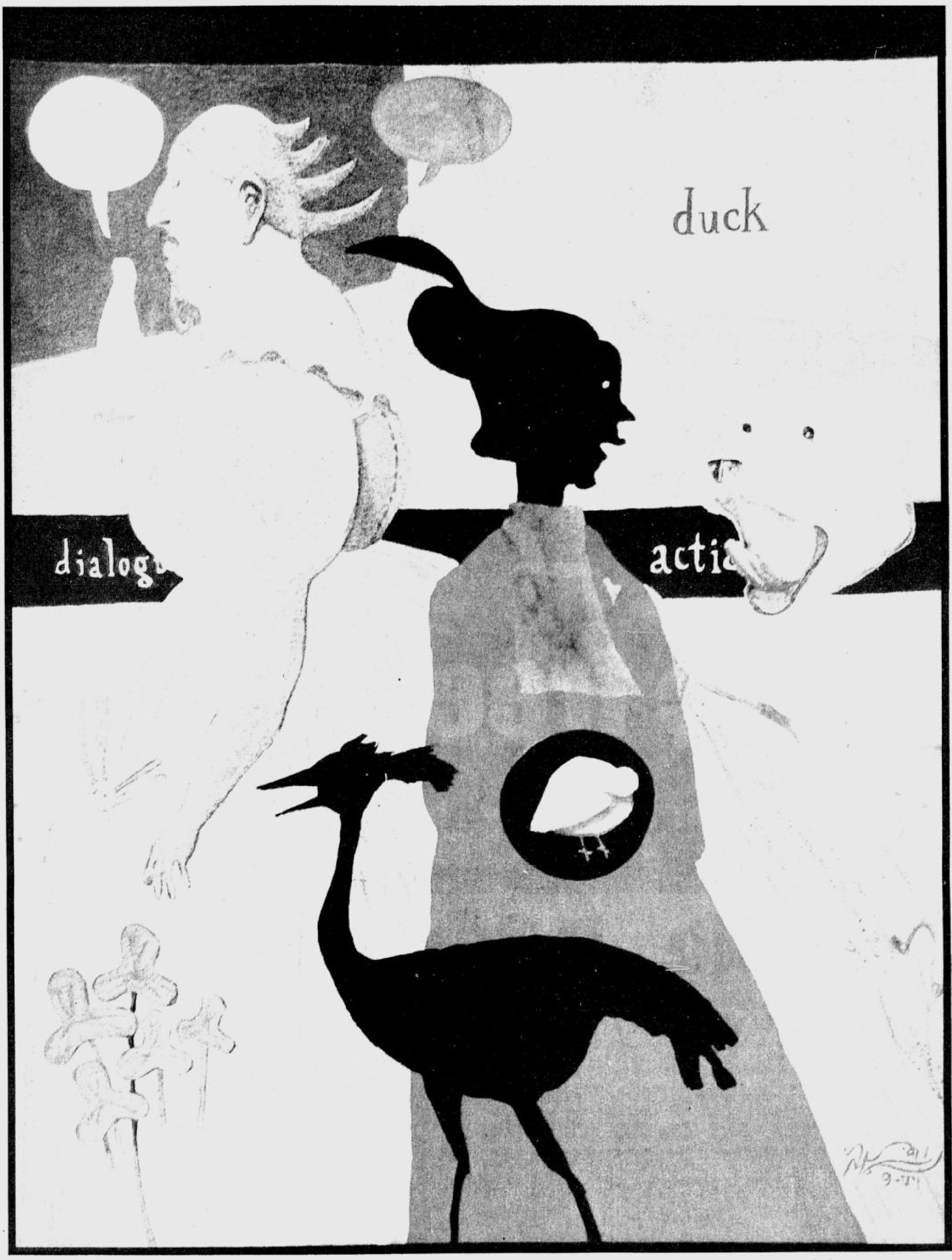
See Mechanics Posters for details   Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 6124 Series of 2004

Super



Do it! Do it!

While the old school prepares for the Year of the Rooster, the youth in this side of the world are ushering in the Year of the Super! Idea

Text by Gino de la Paz and Tals Diaz
Original artwork by Jason Moss

MOST of the time, we take astrological predictions with a rather large grain of salt. Think about it: It's so easy to come up with ambiguous—and at times, ludicrous—forecasts about events, trends and general perils of everyday life.

For some reason, the twilight months of 2004 up until the dawn of the new year are chock-full of bogus psychics who churn out loopy doomsday statements such as "*May mamamatay na artista/politico/sikat na tao sa taong ito* (A famous actor/politician/celebrity will die this year)" or "*May masamang mangyayari sa kapaligiran bago matapos ang taon* (A natural calamity will occur before the year ends)." Real translation: No shit.

Instead of gazing into the same crystal *bola*, however, we'd much rather base our own prophecies on tangible observations mixed in with an equal dose of logic and gut feel. So in terms of what young people will be doing, we predict 5 "In" things for 2005: Instinct, Inspiration, Innovation, Individualism and of course, Intelligence. Here goes...

Instinct

Taking a cue from recent bazaar history, some of the most pioneering enterprises started out as good ideas. One can be a wellspring of great concepts, but that zeal will only be worth something if you act on it.

My Fetish, Your Fetish is an example of basic fashionista instinct at work. The four girls behind this operation felt the need to create bags with interchangeable Velcro bands to match your outfit whether you're going Oriental or organic. These DIY divas saw a need, figured out a way to make the most out of it and started a thriving business.

Inspiration

Inspiration is the fuel of a creative economy. For Ana Villalon, her Bohemiana line of hand-painted jewelry was brought about by a free-spirited surfer lifestyle. Starting out two years ago by embellishing capiz shells, she has ventured into utility bags and clothing as well.

Innovation

Going global, the gadget of the second is undoubtedly the iPod. Steve Jobs, icon of the bourgeois bohemian set, sped up the evolution of existing portable music players and created this highly coveted MP3 player. The iPod's one-two punch of functionality and style is the sleeker and hipper version of yesterday's DiscMan.

Individualism

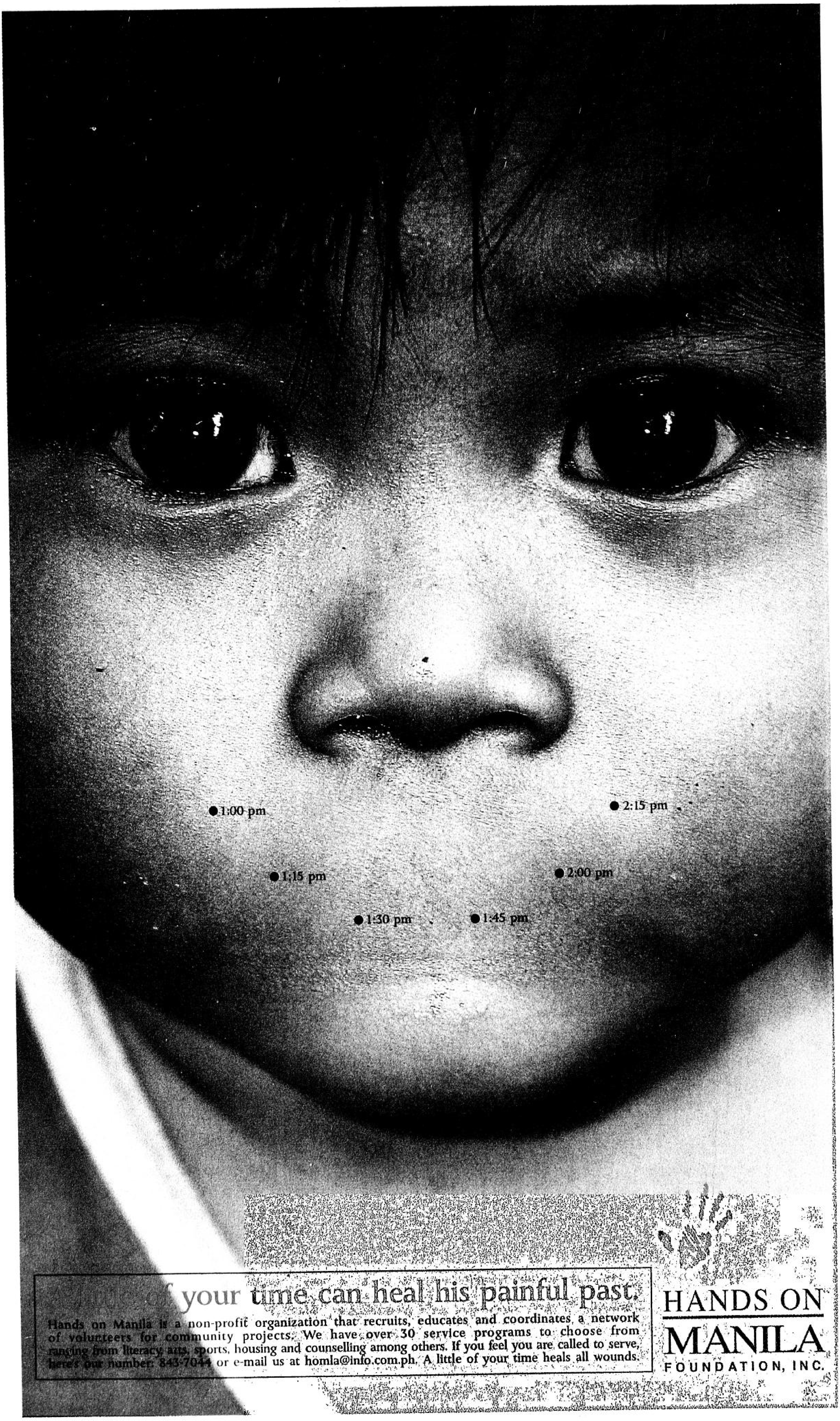
When it comes to fashion, the reworked vintage movement headlined by members of the Young Designers Guild, the luxe embellishment of Louis Claparols' Imelda-themed couture and Bea Valdes' beaded bags, and the custom-made feel of Ino Caluza's designer jeans all champion nonconformity. Distancing themselves from the crowd, their collective spirit proves that it pays to pay attention to details.

Intelligence

And of course, nothing beats enhancing yourself. Whether it's taking up a new course at your university, finishing that dog-eared book or following up on a long-forgotten interest, a sound mind should always dominate all your endeavors.

Generation Why Not?

Without a doubt, it is possible to carve your own entrepreneurial path. More than a year of Super! ideas, though, 2005 should be the year when you simply do it, DO IT!



A little of your time can heal his painful past.

Hands on Manila is a non-profit organization that recruits, educates and coordinates a network of volunteers for community projects. We have over 30 service programs to choose from ranging from literacy, arts, sports, housing and counselling among others. If you feel you are called to serve, here's our number: 843-7044 or e-mail us at homla@info.com.ph. A little of your time heals all wounds.

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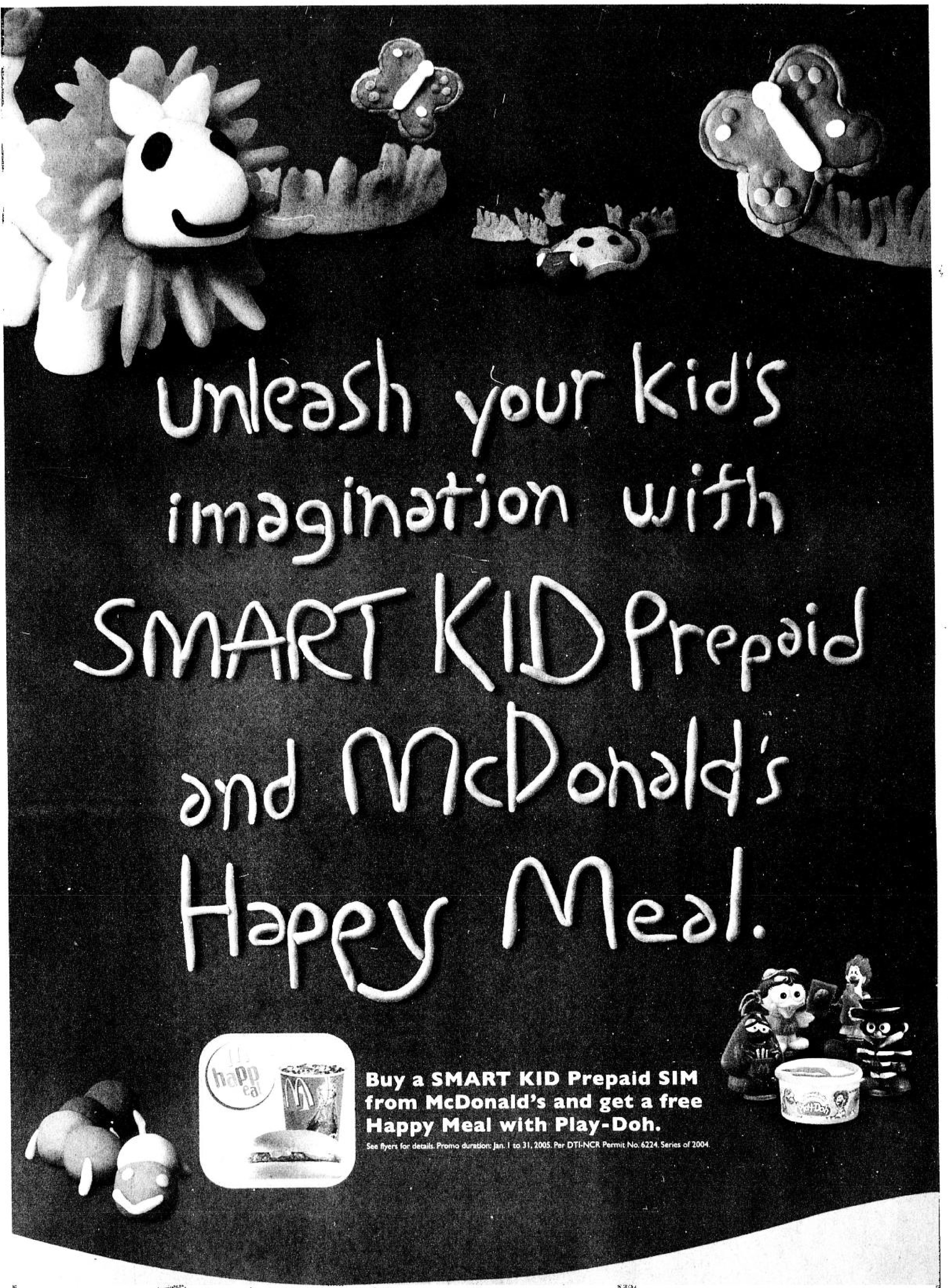
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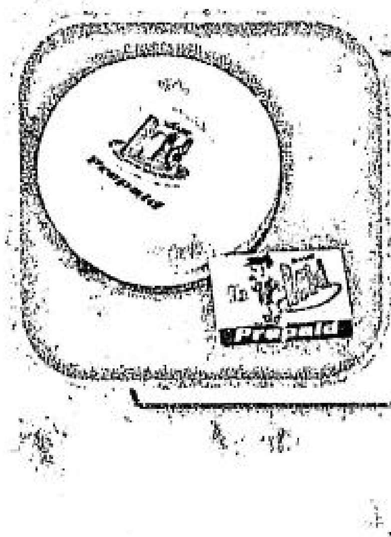

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CELEBRATE Filipino musical talent by seeing a band this week

MIXED BAG

Jan. 1-30: The Department of Tourism presents The Amazing Bird Show. Catch eagles, owls, and other exotic birds at the Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center, Diliman, QC. Call 929-9310 or 929-9306.

Jan. 15: The Swedish Cuisine Week offers a week of distinctly Swedish cuisine and jazz music at the Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental. Mainstream jazz music with The Sliding Hammers—a lively Swedish jazz group led by sister trombonists Karin and Mimmi Hammar with outstanding guest guitarist Andreas Pettersson— which will be performing during lunch on Monday, and dinner on Monday, Tuesday and Friday.

Jan. 19 & 26: Wednesday Nights at the Museum. Various cultural happenings every Wednesday night of January at the Ayala Museum, Ayala Center, Makati. For a complete schedule, call 757-7117 to 31 or e-mail inquiry@ayalamuseum.org.

Schedules may change without prior notice. Check with the venues for updates. For more information, text 24/7 through your mobile phone and send to 2949 for Globe and 209 for Smart, log on to www.mag24-7.com or pick up your free copy of 24/7 Nocturnal Navigator at bars and restos around the city. Submit your schedules and comments every Wednesday to to e-mail address events@mag24-7.com.

To jive in 2005

By Janine Cuenca-Dario

24/7 Nocturnal Navigator

Janine Cuenca-Dario

ONLY after compiling events for some weeks did I realize that there is more to this city than meets the eye. We have world-class theater, art exhibits and foreign films screened weekly. An expatriate based in a more cosmopolitan neighboring city-state confesses that Manila is his party place in this side of the world. "Your city has so much soul."

Explore the Filipino's famed talent at 70s Bistro, an unpretentious bar tucked away from the maddening crowd in Anonas St., Project 2, Quezon City (T: 434-3597). They host the best bands and artists from Cookie Chua to the Jerks and Asin to entertain you with jazz, reggae, classic rock and blues--definitely none of the overplayed tunes of Kenny G or karaoke numbers.

Jan. 15, Saturday

'80s Disco: Mystique with Boyet Almazan at Teak, Rockwell

Back to House with Adrian Cuenca and Martin Pulgar at Temple, Greenbelt 2

Chillout: Lounge with Elian Habayeb at Paseo Uno, Mandarin Oriental

House: Massive House at Bed, Malate

Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental

Latin Band Fuego at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Lounge with Chillout DJs at Paseo Uno, Mandarin Oriental

Meat Packin' Saturdays with Kevin Ruiz at Government, Makati Ave.

R&B/Hip-hop: Flava'D feat. Rocky Rock at Absinth, Greenbelt 3

R&B: Dancehall Saturdays at V Bar, Glorietta 2

Reggae: Tropical Depression at '70s Bistro, QC

Pop vocal group Akafellas, K24/7 at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC

Rock bands at revolver: four, Café Saguijo, Makati

Repertory Philippines' "Oh Romeo" at Onstage, Greenbelt 1

Thor at Mega Strip, Megamall and Pagcor

Jan. 16, Sunday

Amazing Bird Show at Ninoy Aquino Parks and Wildlife Center

Children's Activity and Reading Corner: lunchtime at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental

Crossings exhibit at Ayala Museum

Living Art exhibit at National Museum

Paseo Uno Trio: lunch at Paseo Uno, Mandarin Oriental

Reggae band at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Repertory Philippines' "Oh Romeo" at Onstage, Greenbelt 1

Unfolding Manila exhibit at Lopez Museum

Vintage Filipino Photographs at Silver Lens Gallery

Jan. 17, Monday

Acoustic R&B with Release band at Temple, Greenbelt 2

Cooky Chua and Ria Villena-Osorio at '70s Bistro, QC

Latin band Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Rock/Motown: Mondaze with Wunjo at Absinth, Greenbelt 3

Jan. 18, Tuesday

Acoustic singer Paolo Santos at Bagaberde, Pasig

Jazz: Affinity at '70s Bistro, QC

Latin band Guarana at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Living Art exhibit at National Museum

R&B/Hiphop: Ebony Grooves with Jon Herrera and Stephen Ku at V Bar, Glorietta 2

Stand-up comic Tim Tayag & Gang at Piper's, Makati

Jan. 19, Wednesday

House: Visa V Girl's Night Out with DJ Manolet Dario at V Bar, Glorietta 2

Jazz Trio at Captain's Bar, Mandarin Oriental

Pop singer Pido at '70s Bistro, QC

House: Cocoy Puyat and Travis Monsod at Bed, Malate

Retro band Flintstones at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC

R&B: Platinum with Steve Mills at Absinth, Greenbelt 3

Jan. 20, Thursday

2Good2BThursdays at Bed, Malate

Freestyle and Barbie's Cradle at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC

Hiphop/R&B: Silk Thursdays with Steve Mills at Temple, Greenbelt 2

Latin band Arriba at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Rock/House: Rock Night & DJ Patch at Absinth, Greenbelt 3

Rock band Asin at '70s Bistro, QC

VIP Barkada Nights with Steven Lovina at Government, Makati Ave.

Jan. 21, Friday

Sports Meet with House DJs Cocoy Puyat and Travis Monsod at Bed, Malate

Latin band Mai Castro at Café Havana, Greenbelt 3

Mishka Adams at Mati, Rockwell

Retro '80s and '90s: National Anthems with Bam del Valle at Government, Makati Ave.

Rock band The Jerks at '70s Bistro, QC

Tanghalang Pilipino's "The School for Scandal" at CCP

Jan. 22, Saturday

'80s Disco: Mystique with Boyet Almazan at Teak, Rockwell

Back to House with Adrian Cuenca & Martin Pulgar at Temple, Greenbelt 2

Meat Packin' Saturdays with Kevin Ruiz at Government, Makati Ave.

Pop band Side A and Wency Cornejo at Dish, ABS-CBN Compound, QC

R&B/Hip-hop: Flava'D feat. Rocky Rock at Absinth, Greenbelt 3

R&B: Dancehall Saturdays at V Bar, Glorietta 2

Reggae band Spy at '70s Bistro, QC

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8, 15, 22, & 29 (Saturdays)
Kids Fun at the Foodcourt
13 (Thursday)
Stardanz 2005
16 (Sunday)
Nadine Samonte Mall Tour
20 & 27 (Thursday)
Stardanz Eliminations
30 (Sunday)
6-CycleMind Mall Tour feat. Tart
Wednesdays & Fridays
Acoustic Nights @ The Bridge

METROPOLIS ALABANG star Tel. No. 850.3845
8 (Saturday)
Kaexel... In Her Shining Moment
9 (Sunday)
Ron Antonio with Ron Rocks Band Mall Tour
16 (Sunday)
Viva Records Presents... Raymond Manalo
22 (Saturday)
6-CycleMind Mall Tour feat. Tart
23 (Sunday)
Perfect Rhythm Variety Show
29 (Saturday)
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starmall LAS PIÑAS Tel. No. 872.5249
8 (Saturday)
Barney goes to Starmall
9 (Sunday)
Viva Records Presents... Raymond Manalo
14 & 21 (Fridays)
Frenzy Fridays: A Videoke Challenge
16 (Sunday)
Perfect Rhythm Variety Show
22 (Saturday)
Chocolate Festival
28 (Friday)
Frenzy Fridays at the Hub Feat. 6-CycleMind Mall Tour with Tart
29 (Saturday)
Ron Antonio & Ron Rocks Band Mall Tour
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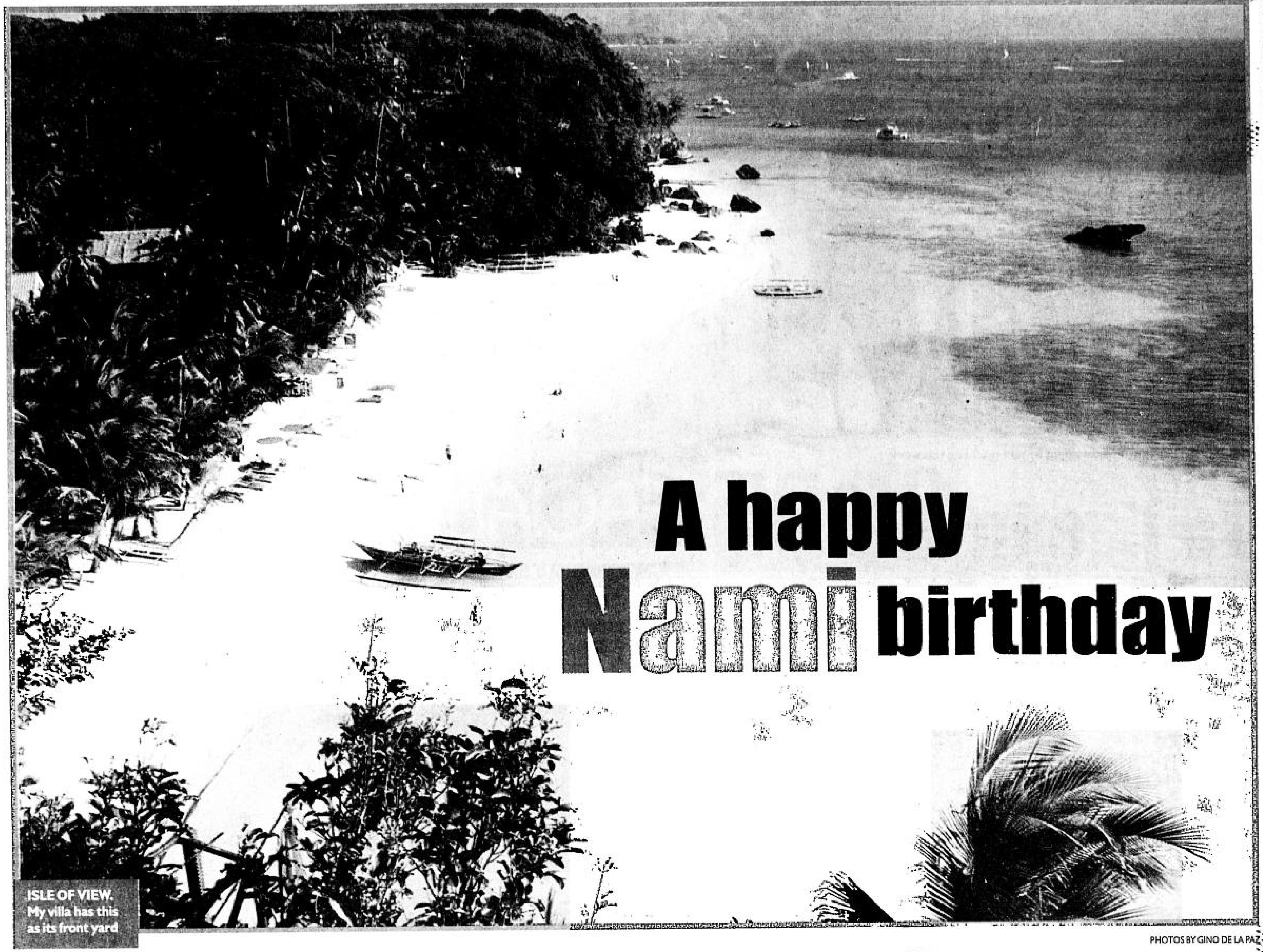
NBA NIGHTS at Mark's Sports Bar Drink All You Can for only P129.00

Event details may change without prior notice.
For details, please call the telephone numbers mentioned above.

A happy Nami birthday



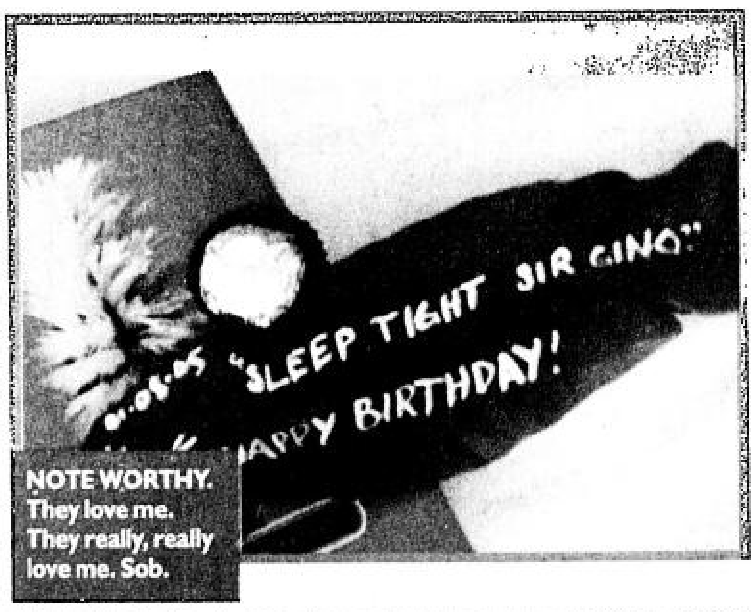
ISLE OF VIEW. My villa has this as its front yard

PHOTOS BY GINO DE LA PAZ

A boutique resort made up of a cluster of hillside villas in Diniwid Beach, Nami Boracay pampers Zen hedonists with everything that is good

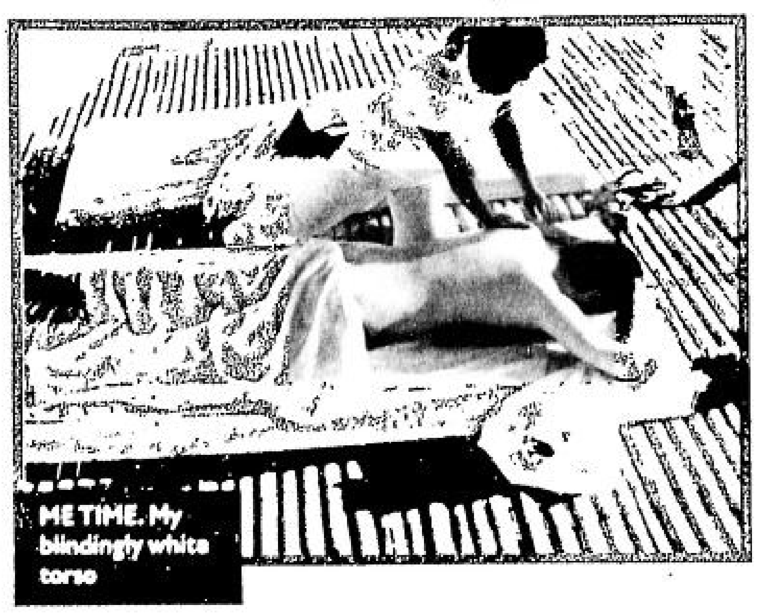
Age against the machine

Gino de la Paz



NOTE WORTHY. They love me. They really, really love me. Sob.

ONE OF THESE THINGS IS NOT LIKE THE OTHER. The Nami survival kit



ME TIME. My blindingly white torso

JUST when I thought that time off was a rapidly shrinking dream, I found myself in a boat surrounded by directional shafts of light and an endless turquoise ocean. As an unabashed city kid, I'm used to staring at the passing scenery in triptych form, usually from a car seat or a train carriage and occasionally, through a Browns Focus store window. I was definitely not used to the infinite expanse of sun, sea and sky, so I made the most out of the rare peace and quiet. Two minutes later, I was out cold. Oops.

Anyway, temporarily rubbing out buildings, traffic and other signs of urban decay from the panorama, the holiday gods must have heard me whining about my vacation-deficit disorder a week earlier. Somehow, I wound up in Nami Boracay, a boutique resort made up of a cluster of hillside villas in Diniwid Beach. Suddenly, I and my terrifyingly white thighs became part of something very Zen but hedonistic at the same time. In my opinion, this alien sensibility was totally worth exploring.

Nami, not nanny

A somewhat upmarket version of spring break, my weekend began with an Angkor Wat-like trek followed by a ride up the resort's scenic elevator. After that brief cardio workout, I was greeted by an entire battalion of personal concierges collectively known as Nami. Meaning "everything that is good" in Ilonggo, Nami also refers to the 12-week program in which these butlers trained. Like Batman's loyal Alfred (plus plus), this Nami System is "at your service" on an awesome new level.

Following the heinously addictive champagne brunch buffet—apparently it's never too early for Moët & Chandon—my Nami, Kitz, handed me a survival kit stockpiled with essentials from Havaianas, Shu Uemura, Polo Ralph Lauren, Kérastase and Bench Body. From a practical hedonist's perspective, this was going to be a strictly high maintenance holiday. Self-restraint? Not today. The goodie bag alone was worth the (euphemistically) interesting Asian Spirit flight. (The smoke, the snacks, the landing. Gotta love it!)

One of 15 boho luxe villas, my tsunami-proof crib was essentially pimped out with a Jacuzzi and a postcard perfect view of the ocean. Being a fan of the great indoors, however, I would've been perfectly happy just cracking open a book, watching some DVDs from the lobby or sleeping in, but that would've been too prematurely world-weary. Even if I was free to pack my agenda with absolutely nothing, I stepped off the pop culture treadmill for a while and, to be really Dalai Lama about it, sought a buzz without the booze. Predictably, that was easier said than done.

Glowing like the MTV logo

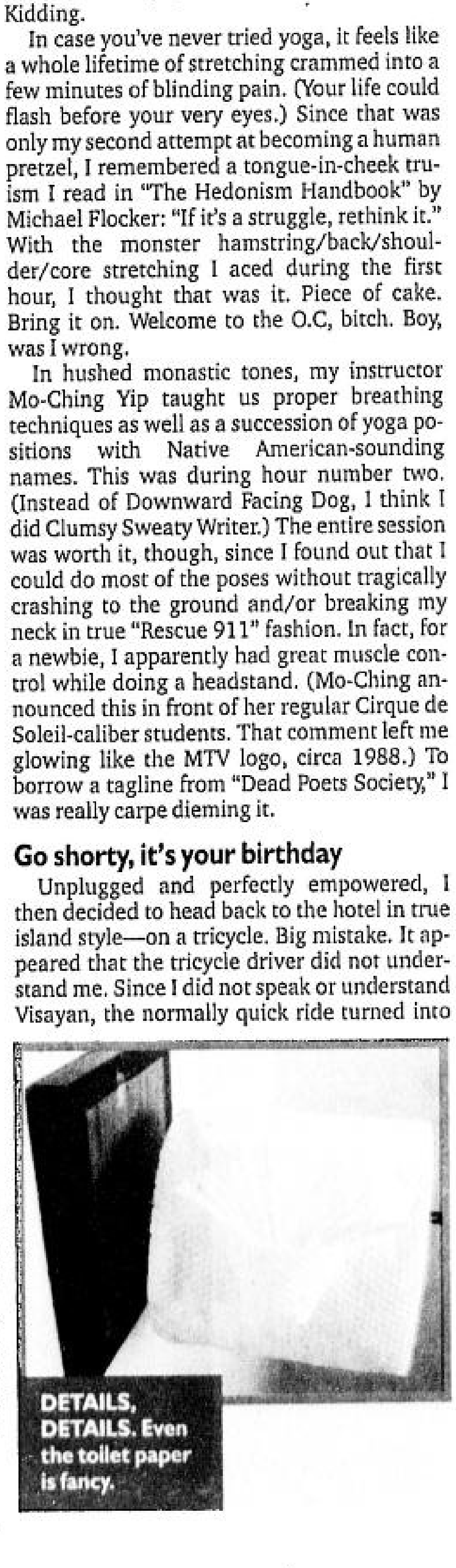
I asked my personal concierge to book a yoga session (P300) at Mandala Spa for me that afternoon. As a detail-oriented pamper palace, Nami Boracay took care of my transportation to Mandala. Too bad my butler couldn't do the yoga for me while he was at it. Kidding.

In case you've never tried yoga, it feels like a whole lifetime of stretching crammed into a few minutes of blinding pain. (Your life could flash before your very eyes.) Since that was only my second attempt at becoming a human pretzel, I remembered a tongue-in-cheek truism I read in "The Hedonism Handbook" by Michael Flocker: "If it's a struggle, rethink it." With the monster hamstring/back/shoulder/core stretching I aced during the first hour, I thought that was it. Piece of cake. Bring it on. Welcome to the O.C, bitch. Boy, was I wrong.

In hushed monastic tones, my instructor Mo-Ching Yip taught us proper breathing techniques as well as a succession of yoga positions with Native American-sounding names. This was during hour number two. (Instead of Downward Facing Dog, I think I did Clumsy Sweaty Writer.) The entire session was worth it, though, since I found out that I could do most of the poses without tragically crashing to the ground and/or breaking my neck in true "Rescue 911" fashion. In fact, for a newbie, I apparently had great muscle control while doing a headstand. (Mo-Ching announced this in front of her regular Cirque de Soleil-caliber students. That comment left me glowing like the MTV logo, circa 1988.) To borrow a tagline from "Dead Poets Society," I was really carpe dieming it.

Go shorty, it's your birthday

Unplugged and perfectly empowered, I then decided to head back to the hotel in true island style—on a tricycle. Big mistake. It appeared that the tricycle driver did not understand me. Since I did not speak or understand Visayan, the normally quick ride turned into the longest trip ever; I wound up in really shady parts of Boracay, some of which could've been stunt doubles for "The Blair Witch Project." In my mind, I was trying desperately to stay centered and drama-free. But by the time I got back to Nami an hour later, my Zen percentage had fallen back to zero. Which wasn't such a big deal since I wanted to get tanked that night anyway. Sorry, Buddha.



DETAILS, DETAILS. Even the toilet paper is fancy.

Together with seven other Capricorns and Aquarians, I celebrated my birthday later that evening. As the water slapped against the shore in rhythmic time, I helped myself to yet another excellent buffet, this time at Oyster Boy. Again, the Nami staff proved that they had a unique way of making a guest feel really special, like in a rock star sense. (Although my birthday falls on the 18th of January, Nami Boracay let me live large and *partay* anyway.) Several empty cases of bubbly later, it was safe to assume that we did not—repeat, did not—pace ourselves. (Yeah, I definitely asked for a hangover.)The next day, my non-tanorexic self got up just in time for my 4 p.m. deep tissue massage by the sea deck. (As a private beach resort, Nami offers a variety of massages, including Swedish, shiatsu and hot stone, that guests can enjoy in their villas or outdoors.) As far as anti-aging remedies go, detox is better than Botox.

HMP hideaway

Since Nami is far away from budget Boracay, there are no billboards and banners to uglify the scenery. The privacy, serenity and customized service are musts for the HMPs, or high maintenance people, who come to Nami not to save, but to spend both their money and energy to pursue well-deserved pleasure. It may sound like a cheesy daily affirmation, but "I am my own Santa Claus" seems to be a common mantra for people who have experienced Nami. Can you blame them?

On a personal note, taking my first holiday of the year and spending my birthday in such a mind-blowing place made me realize that spoiling yourself once in a while is obligatory. It really doesn't make sense to deprive one's self of good old fun especially when you find yourself reduced to a human to-do list. Stealing another passage from "The Hedonism Handbook," here's a point I'd like to underscore: "To live a life consisting only of hard work, virtue and sacrifice is to be a martyr, and martyrs make lousy lovers, friends and party guests. When the true principles of hedonism are employed on a daily basis, the result is a happy person. Granted, that a happy person will undoubtedly piss off the martyr next door, but a truly happy person has no interest in such dreary characters." See you in Nami.

Special thanks to Lex Ledesma, Tina Tinio, Cheese Ledesma, JR Cacho, Migs Bennett, Nami Kitz and everyone at Nami Boracay. Nami Boracay is located at Diniwid Beach, Boracay Island, Malay, Aklan. Tel (036) 288-6753 to 55; Fax (036) 288-6382.

Their Manila office is at Unit 1202 Sage House Bldg., 110 V.A. Rufino St., Legaspi Village, Makati City Tel. (02) 812-1484/812-1689; Fax (02) 812-0668.

Website: www.namiboracay.com.

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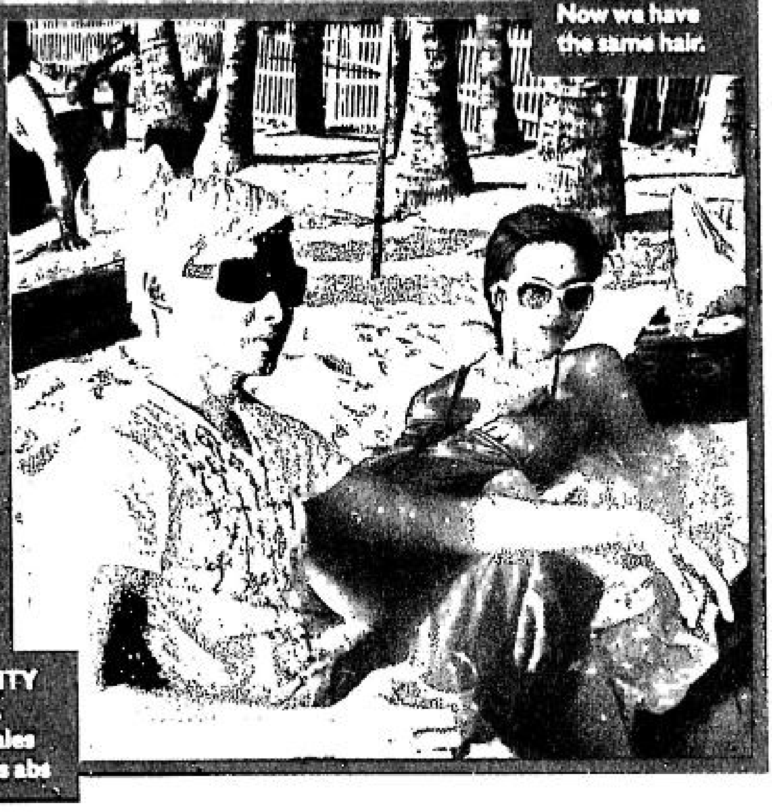
ODY ALENDAR PART WO. Xeng ulueta of Shu emura basking in e sun

SWIM, WHERE? Celine Lopez will launch her swimwear line this March—fight!

NAMI SHINE ROUGE. Tina Tinio and Jackie Cohen-Antonio go depsea diving



BLEACH BOY AND GIRL. Now we have the same hair.

EXTERIORITY COMPLEX. Miguel Rosales shows off his abs

AN WITH THE AN. DJ Montano ter a month in e sun

JACKIE OH! Jackie Cohen-Antonio does what she wants to

SURVIVOR NAMI, YEAR 3. Outwit, outlast, outfit!

Tim Yap

Nami changes everything

N AMI THIS, NAMI THAT. I still can't get over this past weekend. Somewhere along the high hills of Diniwid Beach in Boracay lies the famed fortress named Nami Boracay.

It's my third year in a row and I still haven't been booted out (not that I ever will) of the island. "Survivor: Nami—outwit, outlast, outfit!" gathers some of our town's most non-travel light (read: high maintenance, but in a good way) pleasure seekers.

This time brought some new innovations—each of us was assigned a personal butler (a Nami, that's what we call them), so the spoiled brats (again, not that it's a bad thing) just got "spoiled-er." Hot stone massages by the Nami deck, 24-hour room service while watching "Sex and the City" marathons and nonstop champagne chug-a-thons made our Nami weekend much sweeter the third time around. Hats off to the brother-sister and brother's girlfriend team of **Lex** and **Cheese Ledesma** and **Tina Tinio** for pulling all stops to make Nami: Year 3 three times the fun!

WHAT: Eight celebrators all did the birthday blow at 8 p.m. last Jan. 8 where I stayed at Nami Room No. 8 (my non-blonde Chinoise roots are showing). Moet & Chandon popped 88 bottles of champagne for us insatiables.

WHO: Me (Jan. 17), Tina Tinio (Jan. 11), **Gino de la Paz** (Jan. 18), **Miguel Rosales** (Jan. 18), **Anton Mendoza** (Jan. 17), **Xeng Zulueta** (Jan. 31), **Jackie Cohen-Antonio** (Jan. 25) and **Maurice Arcache** (Dec. 22), all December-January celebrants and the partyphiles who love them. **Kate Moss** (Jan. 16), **Oprah** (Jan. 29), **Jim Carrey** (Jan. 17, just like me!), **Linda Blair** (Jan, 22, yes, she's still alive) and **Elijah Wood** (Jan. 28) weren't able to make it, but that's OK.

WHERE: Luxe island living at Nami, luxe island dining at Oyster Boy, the newest resto that side of Diniwid Beach—the perfect escape from the maddening parties of White Beach Bora. As the Ultra Nate club anthem goes, "Coz you're free... TO DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO!"

WHAT ELSE: I am still dreaming of the shrooms—I mean mushroom tarts, that are a Nami staple. Eggs Benedict, beef rolls with bleu cheese and the Nami Cemoi truffles are to die for. The well-trained Nami staff (with their signature gesture, hand on heart as they bow to you), the men in white skirts, the attentive resort managers and the Ferrero Rocher by my bedside before I sleep—these things will forever remain in my list of Nami memories for years to come.

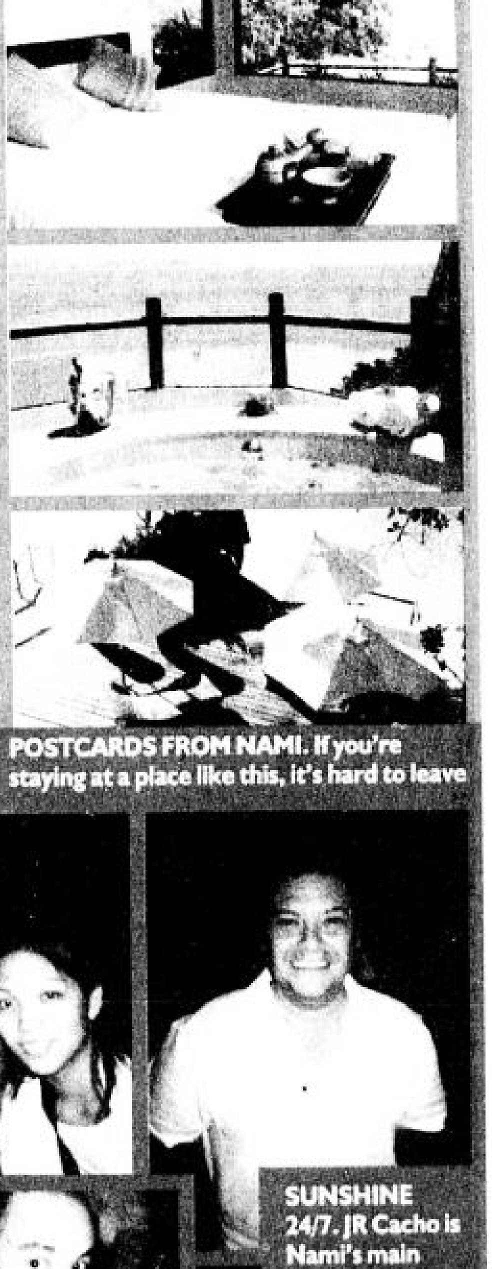
Ah, Nami high.

CHEESE, MISS! Joel Ong and Nami's Cheese Ledesma in Clyde

HOSTS OF THE COAST. Lex Ledesma and Tina Tinio at Oyster Boy Nami

BEACH BOURGEOIS. Anton Mendoza, Lem Carlos and Maurice Arcache

SHROOMS, BABY! Above, Nami's mushroom tarts; below, Cemoi truffles—to die for!



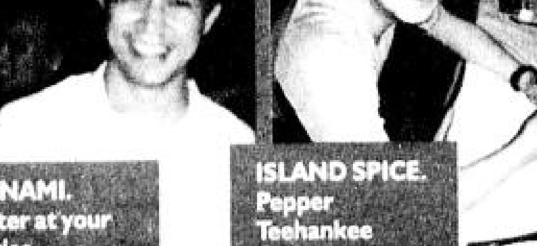
POSTCARDS FROM NAMI. If you're staying at a place like this, it's hard to leave

BLOWING BUBBLY. Moet and Hennessy were overflowing

HU NAMI. ina and Xeng ause for a akeup break

PARTY OF FIVE. Tina Tinio, Jackie Antonio, Manny Del Rosario, Celine Lopez and Tim Yap

STYLE TSUNAMI. Ciara Sevilla and Super!'s Gino de la Paz



ISLAND BUDDIES. Claire Roughton Sumndad, Greg Keyser and Ava Munro

SUNSHINE 24/7. JR Cacho is Nami's main man

MY NAMI. Carter at your service

ISLAND SPICE. Pepper Teehankee panky

I LOVE your smile, JM Rodriguez

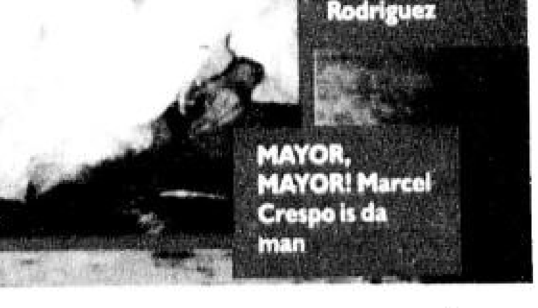
EACH ONDING. em Carlos and hris Esteban

BUDDY LANGUAGE. Miguel Rosales and Wilson Fang

MANDALOVE SPA. Jove Schrottman and Reo Mendoza

LIVER SPREAD. Maurice with Patrick Reyno

THE AVIATOR. Nami's Migs Bennett



MAYOR, MAYOR! Marcel Crespo is da man

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SUPER! SELECTIONS

By Pam Pastor

En-lightning

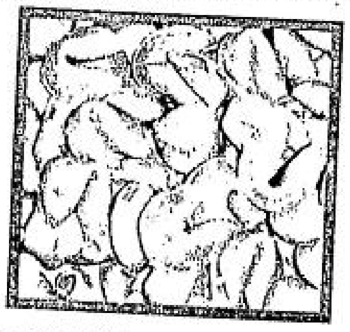
CHECK out landscape architect A.G. Saño's debut photo exhibit "Sigaw ng Liwanag" at the 4th floor bridgeway of SM Megamall until Jan. 19.

His 25 photos, which showcase lightning displays and the city's twinkling lights, will be accompanied by poems written by movers of the literary and music scene—Ricky Lee, Vim Nadera, Luis Katigbak, Mayo Uno Martin, Barbie Almalbis, Noel Cabangon, Buwi Meneses, Isha, Buddy Zabala and Lourd de Veyra, among others.

A chunk of the proceeds will go to the He Cares Foundation Streetchildren Caring Center.

A dose of art and yet another opportunity to reach out to others—this photovandalism exhibit is a double-edged sword.

Fortune Seller



WE MADE a great discovery while waiting for a table at Greenbelt 3's Big Buddha. This Chinese resto doesn't only serve a killer roast platter, they're now selling fortune cookies for charity.

Proceeds will go to Pamulaan Lumad Learning Center in Davao City's Marilog District.

Initially, we bought three but the cookies were so yummy that we walked out with a bag of 20.

A tasty treat, a look into your future and the chance to help others for only P5? It might just be the best bargain ever.

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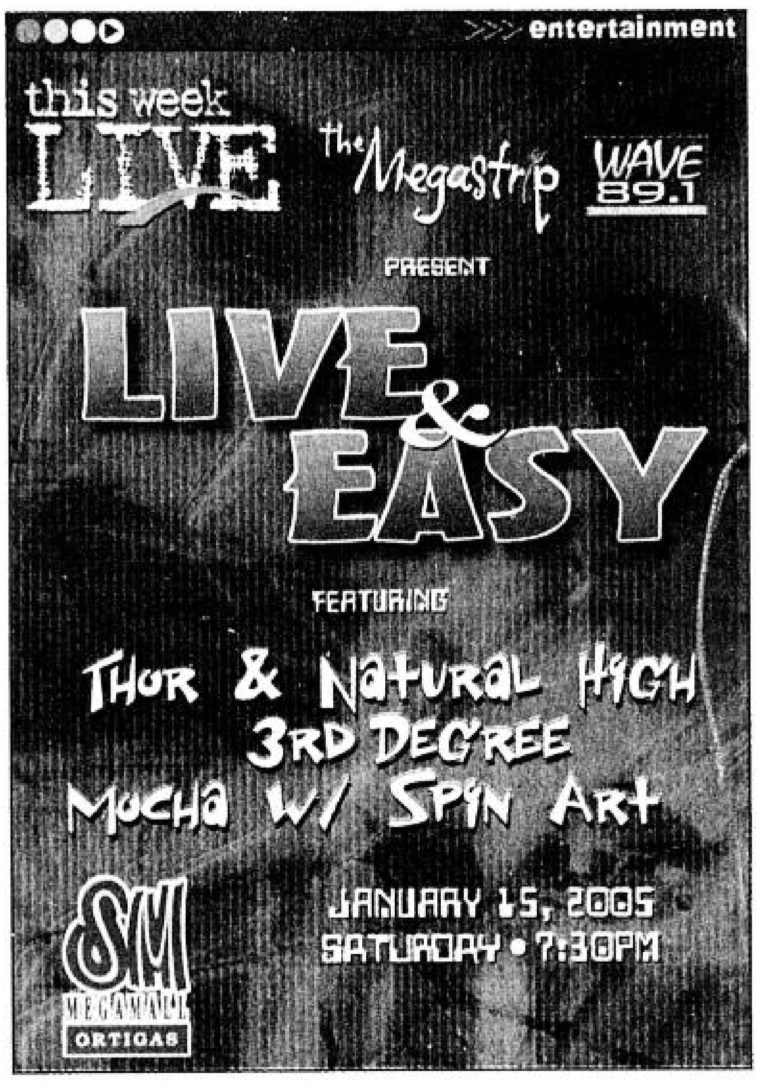

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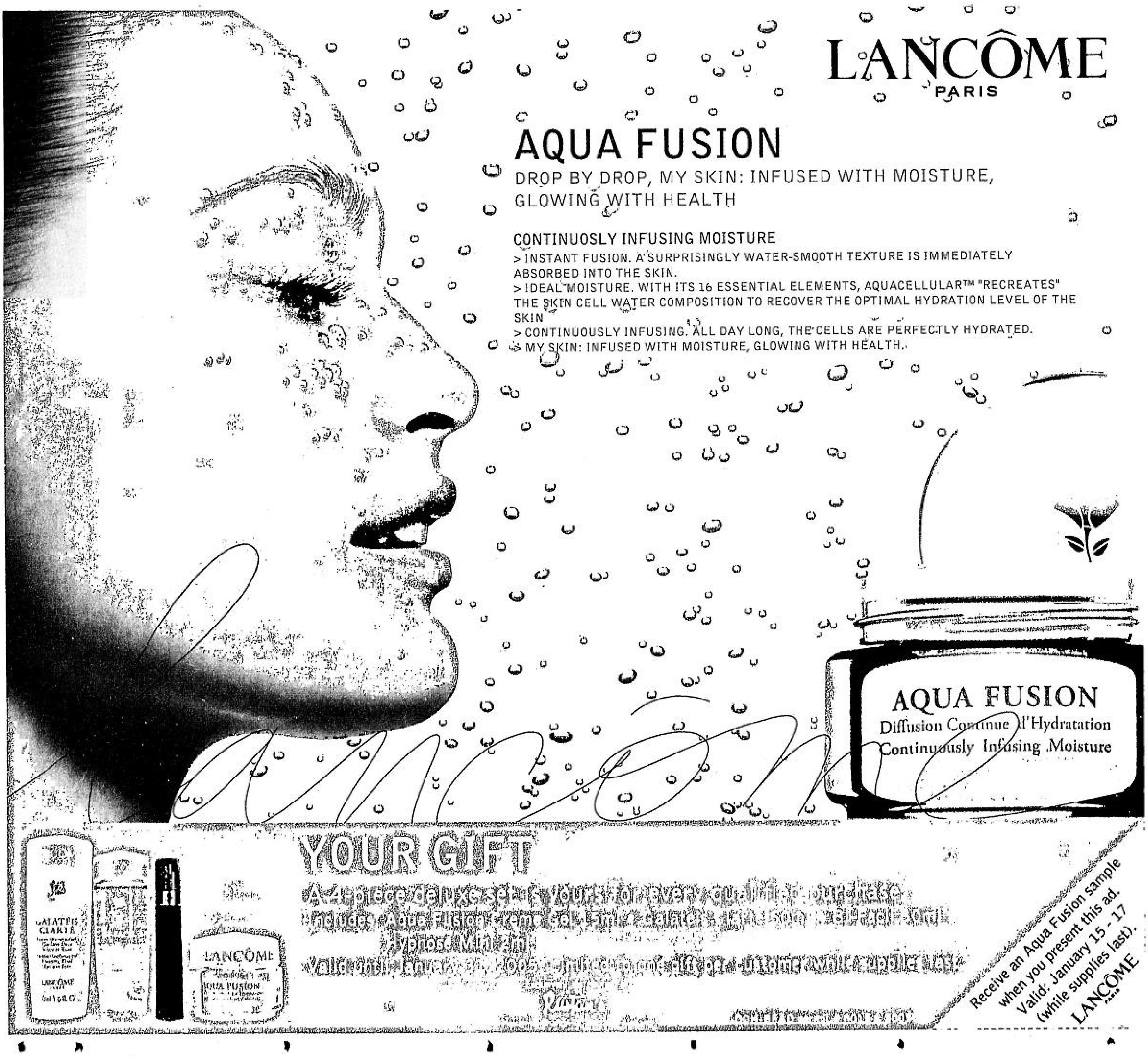

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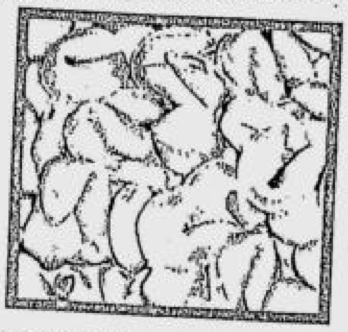

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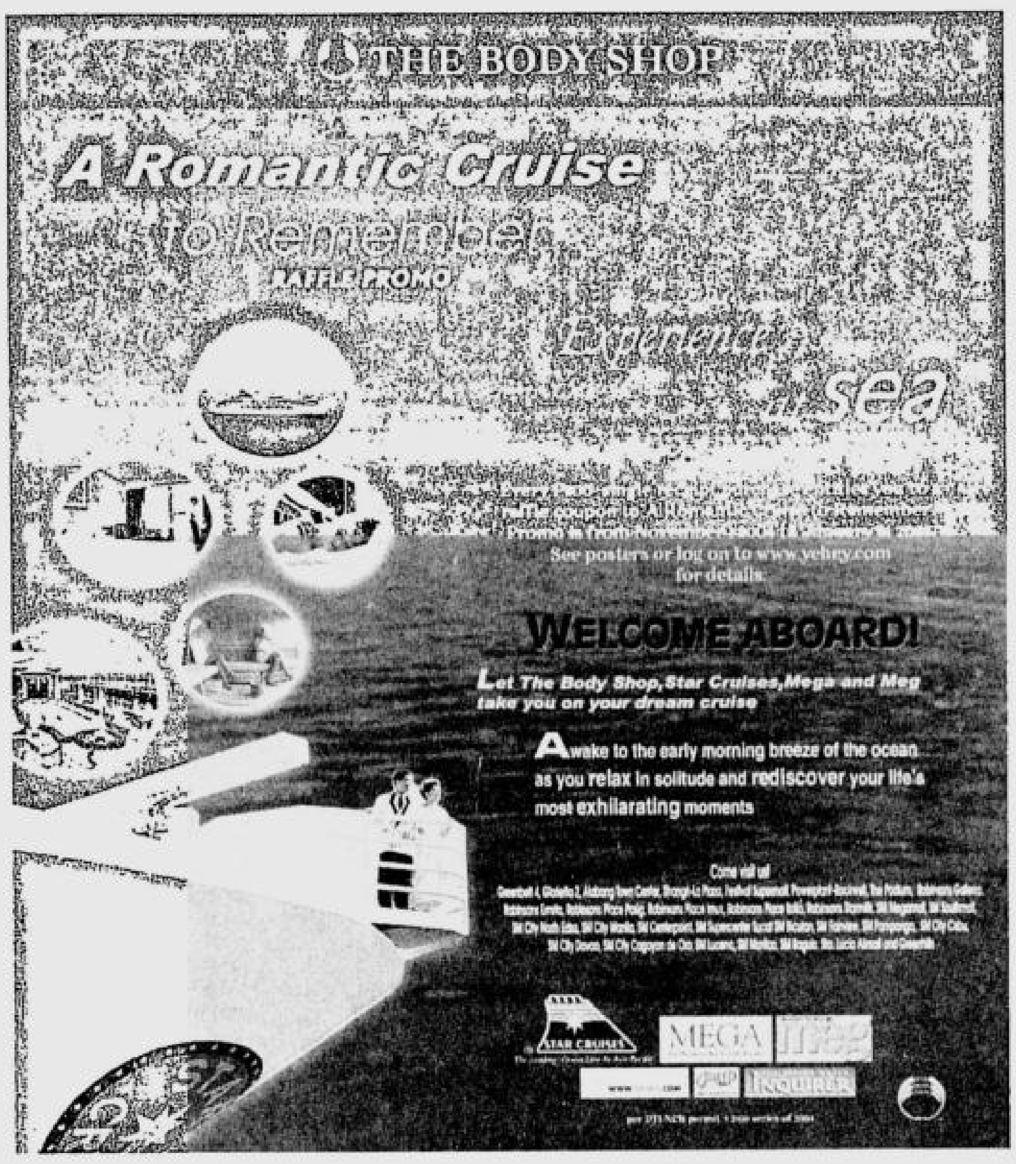

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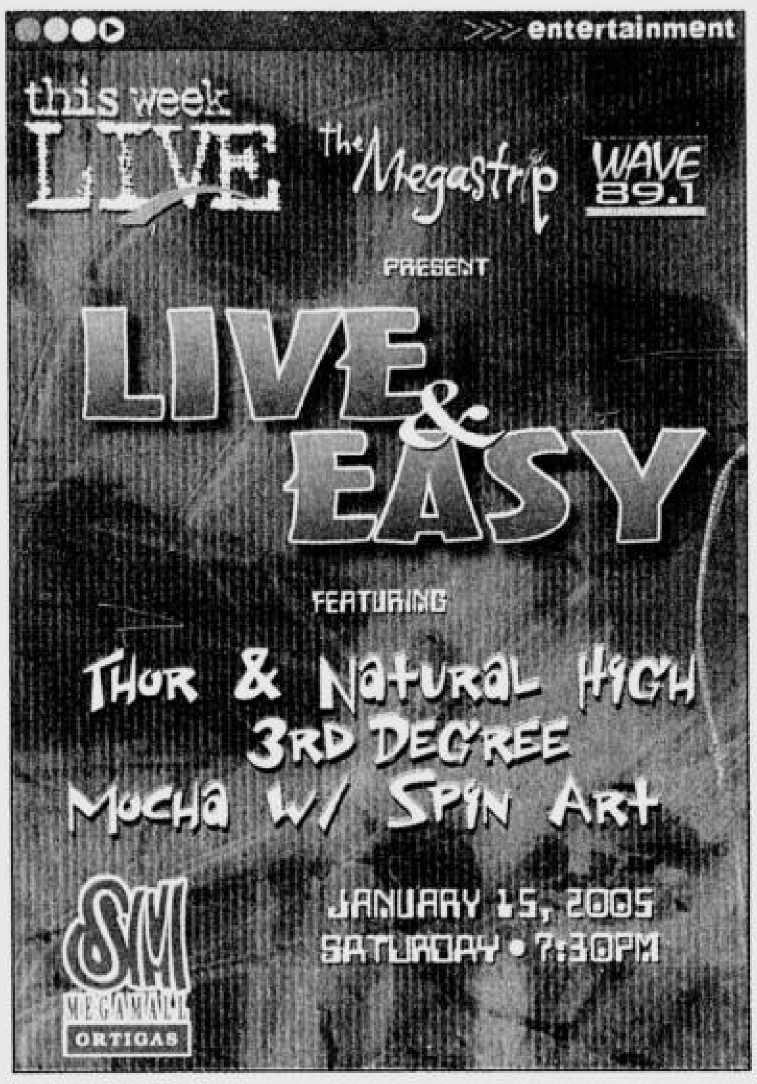

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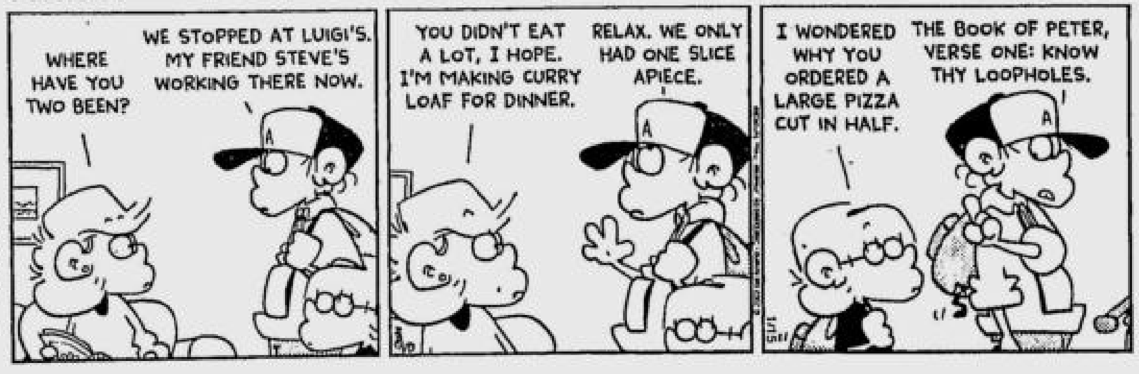
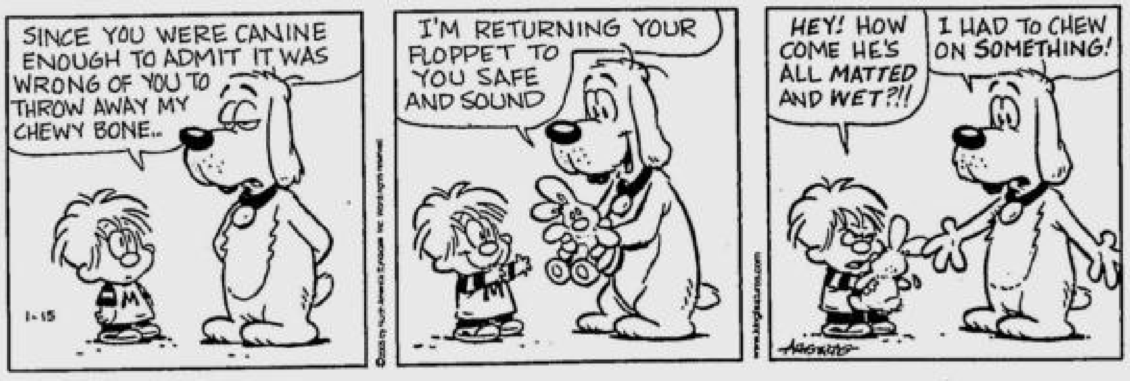
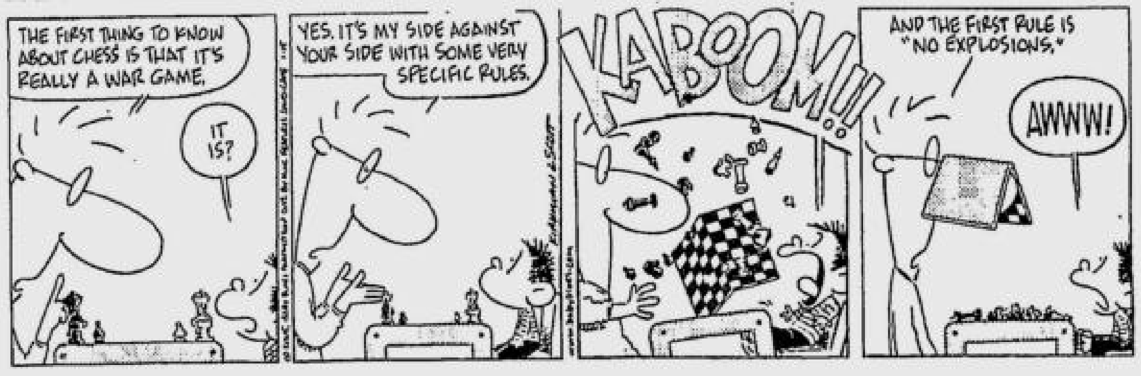

WHERE HAVE YOU TWO BEEN?
WE STOPPED AT LUIGI'S. MY FRIEND STEVE'S WORKING THERE NOW.
YOU DIDN'T EAT A LOT, I HOPE. I'M MAKING CURRY LOAF FOR DINNER.
RELAX. WE ONLY HAD ONE SLICE APIECE.
I WONDERED WHY YOU ORDERED A LARGE PIZZA CUT IN HALF.
THE BOOK OF PETER, VERSE ONE: KNOW THY LOOPHOLES.

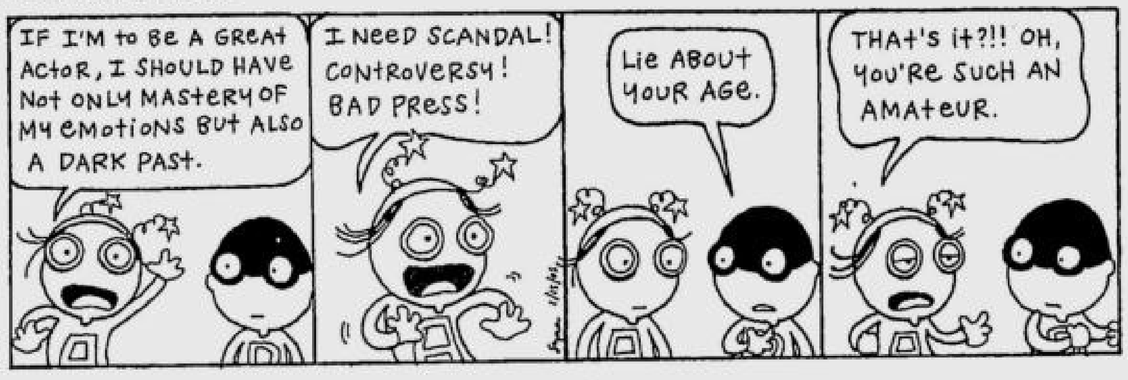
MARVIN BY TOM ARMSTRONG


SINCE YOU WERE CANINE ENOUGH TO ADMIT IT WAS WRONG OF YOU TO THROW AWAY MY CHEWY BONE..
1-15
I'M RETURNING YOUR FLOPPET TO YOU SAFE AND SOUND
HEY! HOW COME HE'S ALL MATTED AND WET?!!
I HAD TO CHEW ON SOMETHING!

BABY BLUES BY JERRY SCOTT


THE FIRST THING TO KNOW ABOUT CHESS IS THAT IT'S REALLY A WAR GAME.
IT IS?
YES. IT'S MY SIDE AGAINST YOUR SIDE WITH SOME VERY SPECIFIC RULES.
KABOOM!!
AND THE FIRST RULE IS "NO EXPLOSIONS."
AWWW!

ATOMO AND WEBOY BY LYRA GARCELLANO


IF I'M TO BE A GREAT ACTOR, I SHOULD HAVE NOT ONLY MASTERY OF MY EMOTIONS BUT ALSO A DARK PAST.
I NEED SCANDAL! CONTROVERSY! BAD PRESS!
LIE ABOUT YOUR AGE.
THAT'S IT?!! OH, YOU'RE SUCH AN AMATEUR.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You are hardworking, idealistic and persevering; nevertheless, you love your pleasures. You appreciate the good life. Sometimes you succeed so well at something that others view you in heroic terms. (In turn, when you were young, you had your own heroes.) You are a quick learner. Expect major changes this year, perhaps as significant as in 1994.
Birthdate of: Martin Luther King Jr., civil-rights activist; Mario Van Peebles, actor: Andrea Martin, comic

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): You feel enormously idealistic today. You want to improve the world in some way. In particular, you're concerned with matters in faraway countries.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You feel quite selfless today. You want to use your efforts, your money, your possessions or your resources to help others. You're willing to do whatever you can.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): One of two things today: Either you're willing to help a friend, or a friend is willing to help you. Either way, what you have going is a mutual admiration society.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're not aggressive at work today—quite the opposite. You're ready to help others, and they are ready to help you. People feel a need to be supportive today.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): Playful activities with children will be quite delightful today. You find it easy to be tenderhearted toward young people. Similarly, your efforts to be creative will be successful!

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're doing something different at home today. It might involve making some new kind of beverage. Be careful that you don't go overboard.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You're willing to use your brains and muscles to help children today. You know that whatever effort you put out will make a big difference to those who are less fortunate and needy.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): You're not just tempted, you're actually spending money today on something that is a bit luxurious for your home or a family member. It's irresistible! (That's OK.)

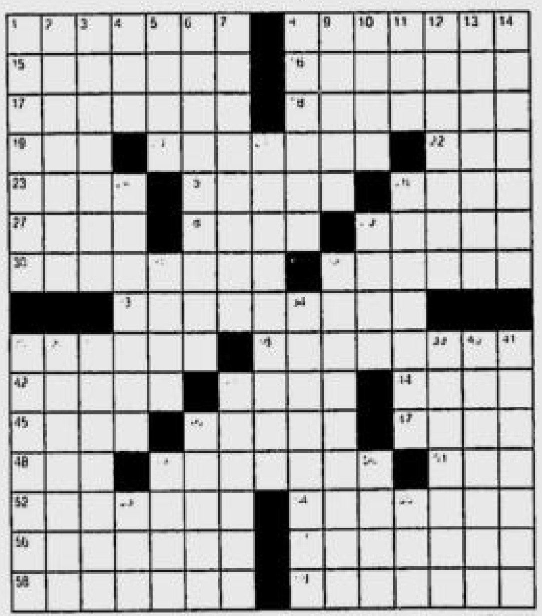
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): It's easy for you to see the world around you with greater sensitivity today. You're particularly sensitive to the needs of friends and neighbors.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Get out the Ouija board. You're drawn to mysterious, exotic, occult subjects today. Whether it's discussions about ghosts or weird coincidences, you're on it!

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): More than any other sign, you want to make the world a better place. You always do. You want the greatest good for the greatest number. Today you will look for ways to do this.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Others see you as sensitive, caring and kind today. It's actually who you are, but today it is very obvious.

DAILY CROSSWORD

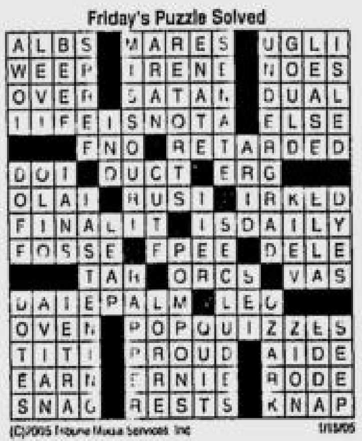


By Matthew Higgins
Concord, NH
1/15/05

ACROSS
1 Long-eared hounds
8 Postures
15 Pastoral poem
16 Lawbreaker's refuge
17 Arrange in steps
18 Moderate in tempo
19 Place for phys. ed.
20 Renders
22 Titleist supporter
23 Money for mendicants
25 Deficiencies
26 Singer Vikki
27 Money of Cambodia
28 Historical periods
29 Complain
30 Skinflints
32 Pressed
33 Tinted visors
35 Sacred river of India
38 Mournful writers
42 Oil-well firefighter Red
43 Chow __
44 Pale tan
45 Give a wide berth to
46 Short choral composition
47 Laugh boisterously
48 Allow
49 Carrotlike vegetable
51 Grave letters
52 Maximally dry
54 Sweet potato
56 Singer Etheridge
57 Deep, narrow gorges
58 Computer adjunct
59 Winter transportation

DOWN
1 Mendicants
2 Type of paint
3 Big house or stir
4 Put in a new lawn
5 Yikes!
6 Teaching assignments
7 Oozings
8 Shantytown shanties
9 Shades
10 Uses an abacus
11 Teachers' org.
12 Keep under control
13 Muse of music
14 Piloted
21 Continental glaciers
24 Fizz type
26 Pastoral staff
29 Norman or Kinnear
31 __ and terminer
32 Agreeing exactly
34 Legal transferors of property
35 Gay Nineties illumination
36 Sticker?
37 Chambered mollusks
39 Making points
40 Office apprentice
41 Outdo
43 Pestle's companion
46 Billiards stroke
49 Nuisance
50 Make a driveway
53 Noisy disturbance
55 Free

Friday's Puzzle Solved



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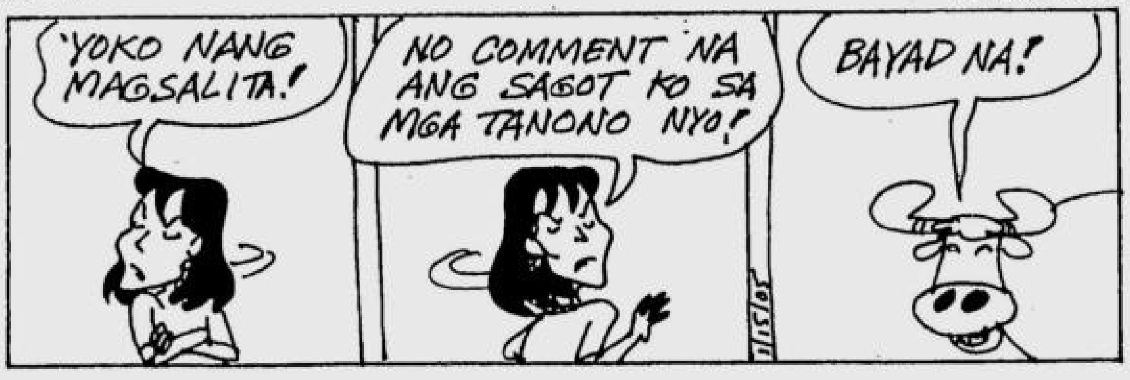
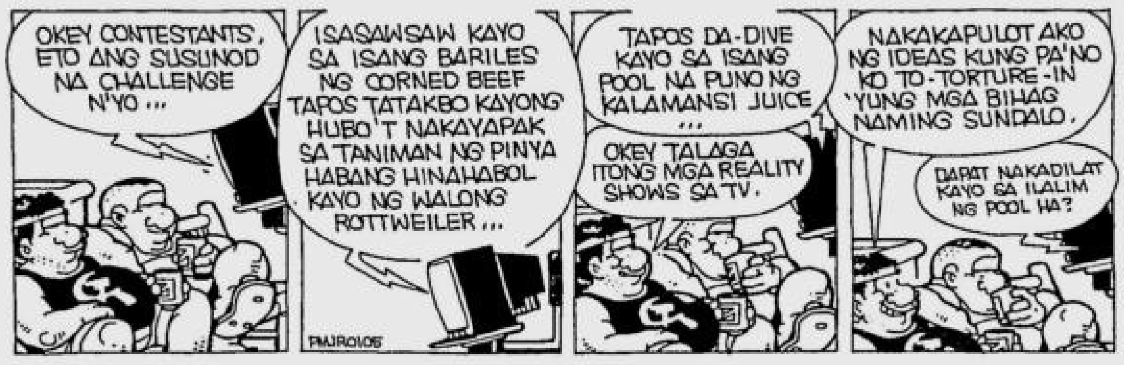
1/15/05

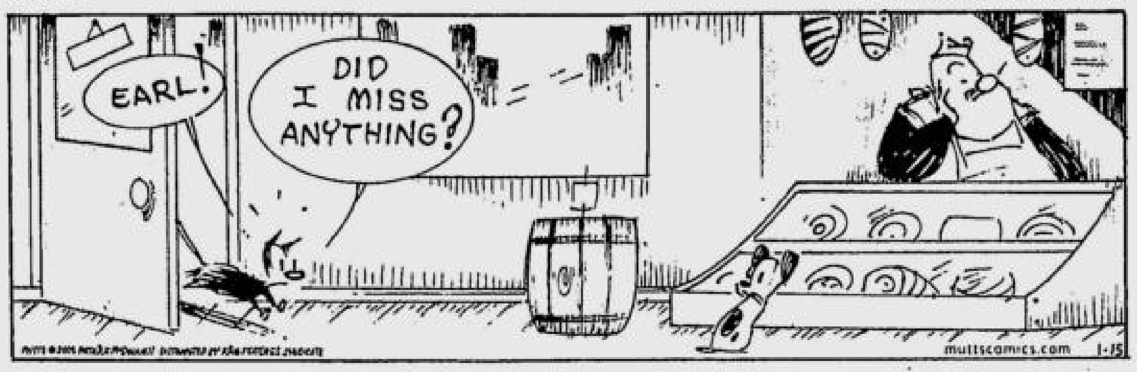
A. LIPIN BY JESS ABRERA


'YOKO NANG MAGSALITA!
NO COMMENT NA ANG SAGOT KO SA MGA TANONO NYO!
BAYAD NA!

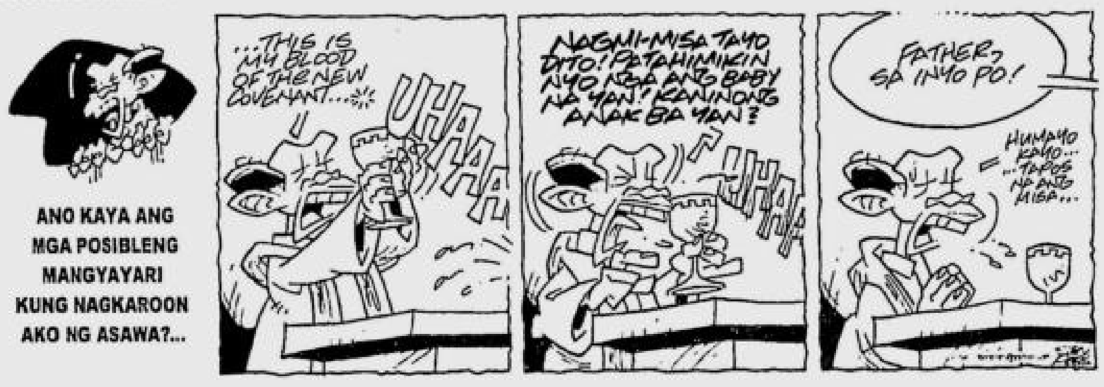
PUGAD BABOY BY P.M. JUNIOR


OKEY CONTESTANTS, ETO ANG SUSUNOD NA CHALLENGE N'YO ...
ISASAWSAW KAYO SA ISANG BARILES NG CORNED BEEF TAPOS TATAKBO KAYONG HUBO'T NAKAYAPAK SA TANIMAN NG PINYA HABANG HINAHABOL KAYO NG WALONG ROTTWEILER ...
TAPOS DA-DIVE KAYO SA ISANG POOL NA PUNO NG KALAMANSI JUICE ...
OKEY TALAGA ITONG MGA REALITY SHOWS SA TV.
NAKAKAPULOT AKO NG IDEAS KUNG PA'NO KO TO-TORTURE-IN 'YUNG MGA BIHAG NAMING SUNDALO.
DAPAT NAKADILAT KAYO SA ILALIM NG POOL HA?

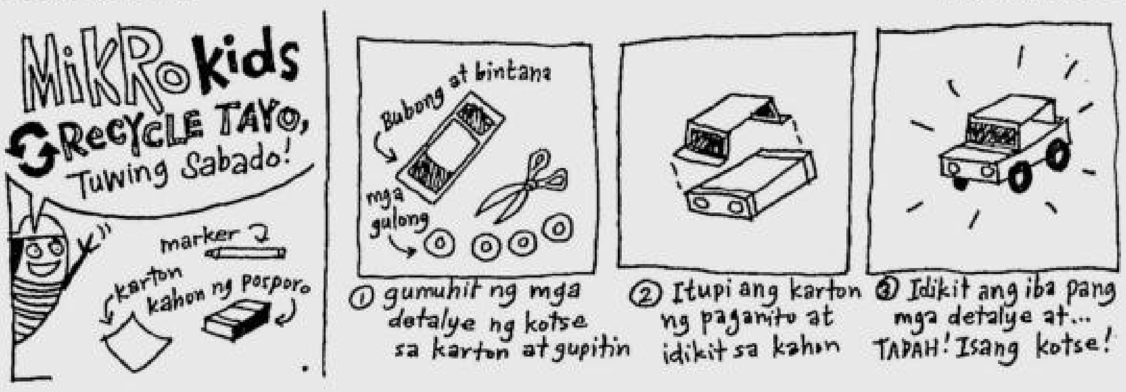
MUTTS BY PATRICK McDONNELL


EARL!
DID I MISS ANYTHING?
muttscomics.com 1-15

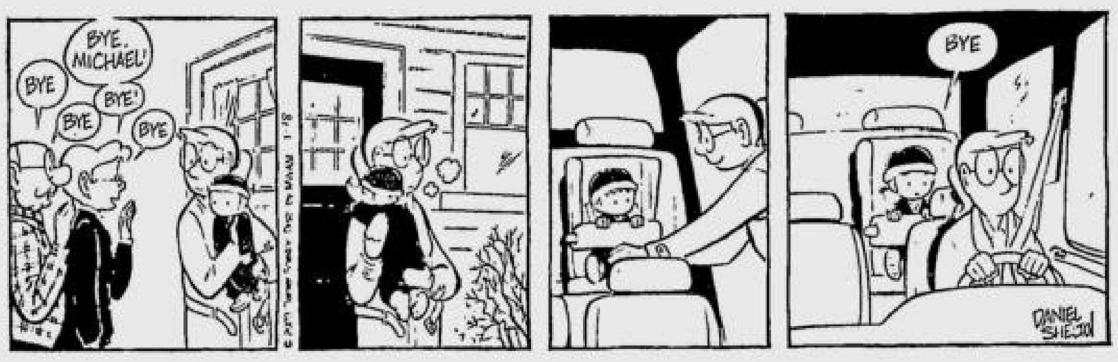
DIVINE COMEDY BY STEVEN PABALINAS


ANO KAYA ANG MGA POSIBLENG MANGYAYARI KUNG NAGKAROON AKO NG ASAWA?...
...THIS IS MY BLOOD OF THE NEW COVENANT...
UHAAA
NAGMI-MISA TAYO DITO! PATAHIMIKIN NYO NGA ANG BABY NA YAN! KANINONG ANAK BA YAN?
UHAA
FATHER, SA INYO PO!
HUMAYO KAYO... TAPOS NA ANG MISA...

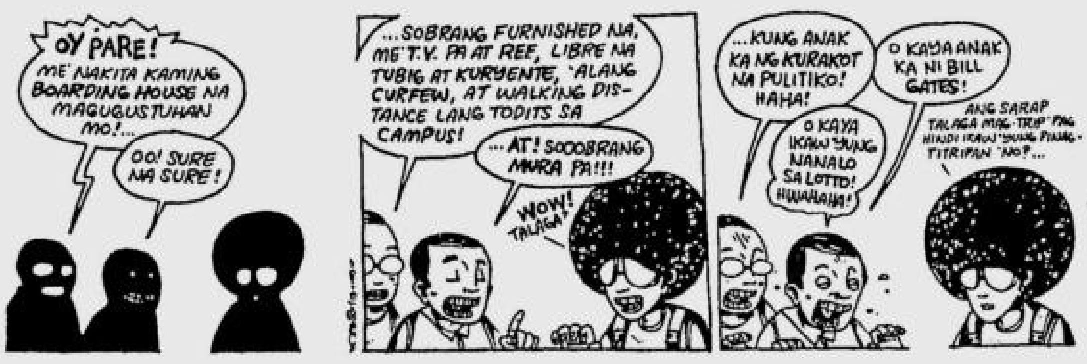
MIKROKOSMOS BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


MiKRo Kids
RECYCLE TAYO, Tuwing Sabado!
marker
karton
kahon ng posporo
Bubong at bintana
mga gulong
① gumuhit ng mga detalye ng kotse sa karton at gupitin
② Itupi ang karton ng paganito at idikit sa kahon
③ Idikit ang iba pang mga detalye at... TADAH! Isang kotse!

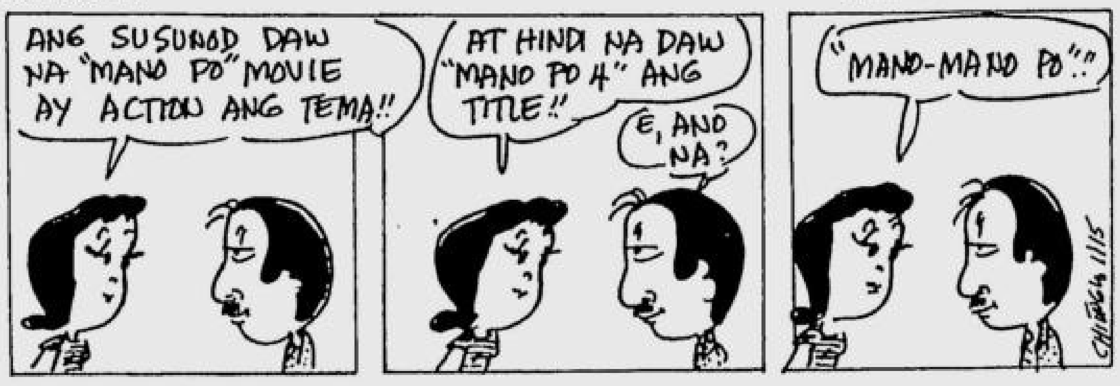
BEN BY DANIEL SHELTON


BYE
BYE, MICHAEL!
BYE
BYE!
BYE
BYE

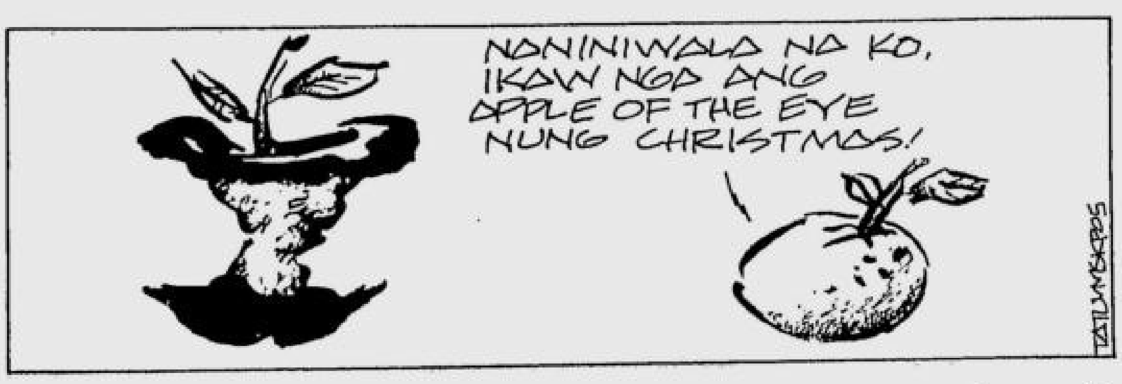
KIKO MACHINE BY MANIX ABRERA


OY PARE! ME' NAKITA KAMING BOARDING HOUSE NA MAGUGUSTUHAN MO!...
OO! SURE NA SURE!
...SOBRANG FURNISHED NA, ME' T.V. PA AT REF, LIBRE NA TUBIG AT KURYENTE, 'ALANG CURFEW, AT WALKING DISTANCE LANG TODITS SA CAMPUS!
...AT! SOOOBRANG MURA PA!!!
WOW! TALAGA?
...KUNG ANAK KA NG KURAKOT NA PULITIKO! HAHA!
O KAYA ANAK KA NI BILL GATES!
O KAYA IKAW 'YUNG NANALO SA LOTTO! HWAHAHA!
ANG SARAP TALAGA MAG-TRIP 'PAG HINDI IKAW 'YUNG PINAG-TITRIPAN 'NO?...

LOVEKNOTS BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


ANG SUSUNOD DAW NA "MANO PO" MOVIE AY ACTION ANG TEMA!!
AT HINDI NA DAW "MANO PO 4" ANG TITLE!!
E, ANO NA?
"MANO-MANO PO"!!

TULDOK BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


NANINIWALA NA KO, IKAW NGA ANG APPLE OF THE EYE NUNG CHRISTMAS!

An open letter to Sandara Park

By James Gabrillo
Original artwork by Richard Chua

Dear Ms Park,

S'up Sandara?

What's happening to your career?

A few months ago, you were the biggest star of that freaky talent search show on TV. You were charming crowds with your Korean blood and quirky behavior. The more those silly judges made you cry with their straight-from-the-cue-cards comments, the more we venerated you. You were the Meteor-Garden-to-happen we've been waiting for. You were the bizarre exchange student from Japan that we've been dreaming to hang out with. You were the immaculate bliss to the eyes of dirty old men who had a thing for Mary "Rosebud" Ong but wanted someone younger.

Now, Sandy (can we call you Sandy?—we love it! It's so beach!), look at you.

The last time we saw you on the tube, you had pigtail braids reminiscent of Maryanne from "Gilligan's Island," and you were singing for a shampoo commercial. Now we have nothing against aspiring singers, but Sandy, the vocals ain't cooperating. Plus your first single "In or Out" was rather "risky" (not to be confused with risqué, which it also was). We were nearly brought to tears. We haven't heard singing that cheesy since "American Idol's" Amy Adams.

Now here are some things you can do to revive your career:

Image change. Your "Children of the Corn" plastic Barbie blonde Molly Mormon attitude is getting superfluous—because every teen in show biz is like that! Go for something unspoiled. Go for surfer chick or aspiring head groupie or just-came-out-of-rehab.

Have an annoying laugh. That's the secret of Julia Roberts and Cameron D. Timberlake, so better create one of your own quick. To assure you loads of recall, our top suggestion would be a really disturbing chuckle that would remind everyone of the evil Toymaker from "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang." A sure winner.

A new on-screen partner. Your current love team is forgettable—that Hero guy needs a haircut.

Try theatre. Do provocative stuff like "Vagina Monologues" or "Rent." If all else fails, run to Trumpets and do "Fables and Parables." That show, Sandy, produces applause no matter how ridiculous the performance goes.

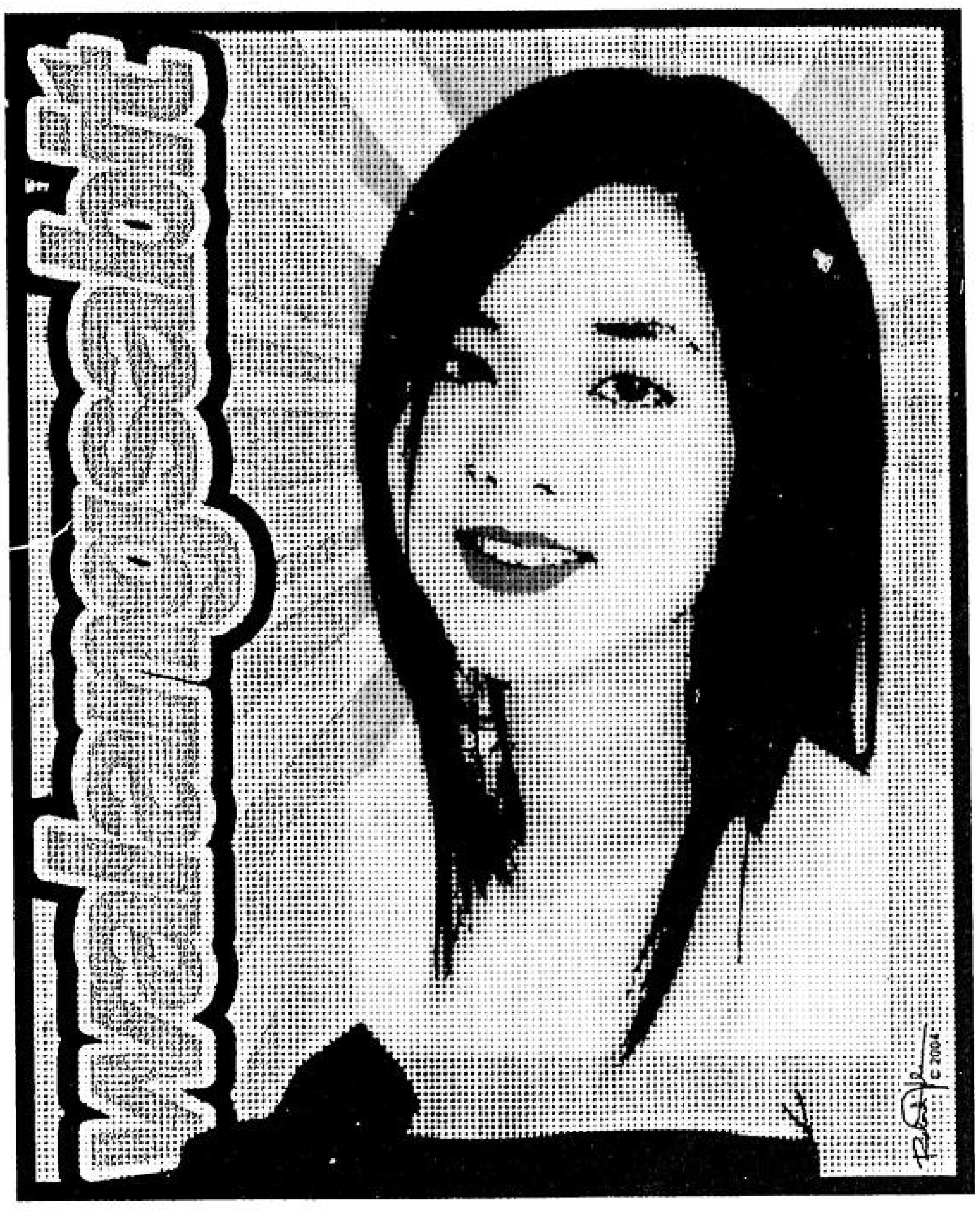
Go indie. Now this wouldn't pay much, but trust us that you'll earn respect from the artsy crowd. Call up Quark Henares ("Saging at Rambutan," "Keka") and shoot now!

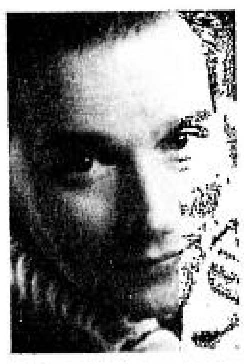
Walk out. When you get nominated for Quark's piece which will probably be titled "I, She-Robot: Murderer from Cyprus," go to the awards night wearing an ostrich costume (a definite buzz maker). When they proclaim that you didn't win (it's gonna go to Vilma, duh), stand up and walk out. While strutting out of the ceremonies, scream loudly, "Me enormous! Meh! Meh! Os! Os! Trich! Meh! Yee! Yeedada-se!" Now we warn you, this plan will only succeed if the doer has extreme focus.

Look, Dara, we love you. That's why we're writing you this letter. Don't get mad at us. Don't brush this off because you think you're doing awesome with all the scheduled guestings for that noontime show. Say it out loud: I AM SANDY. MY CAREER IS GOING TO THE SLAUGHTERHOUSE. I SHALL DO BETTER AFTER READING THIS LETTER.

Or don't listen to us. So we can write funnier stuff about you!

Love,
James





Russell Watson is this season's tune-nami

By Chabs Rubio

BRITISH opera superstar Russell Watson will stage a one-night performance in Manila on Feb. 10 at the PICC Plenary Hall.

Part of the concert's proceeds will go to the Philippine National Red Cross (PNRC) for the benefit of the victims of the typhoons in Quezon and to raise funds for the worldwide Tsunami Rehabilitation Program.

One of the concert's producers, Francis Lumen of Nation Broadcasting Corp. (NBC), is working with PNRC chair Sen. Richard Gordon in staging the concert.

Russell Watson was among the first European artists to answer the call for relief aid for the recent Asian tsunami tragedy. Together with artists like Boy George and Ronan Keating, he agreed to record a song for the tsunami victims entitled "Grief Never Grows Old." Sales of the record will be donated to tsunami victims. They are hoping to generate at least £2 million for a relief fund.

The sponsors of Watson's Manila concert, among them Smart Infinity, Sun Life of Canada, Rado of Switzerland and 92.3 Joey, are also donating part of their sponsorship to the fund raiser.

Russell Watson, Josh Groban and Alessandro Safina are hailed as the heirs to the throne of the "three tenors" Luciano Pavarotti, Placido Domingo and Jose Carreras.

For ticket inquiries, please contact Ticketworld at 891-9999.

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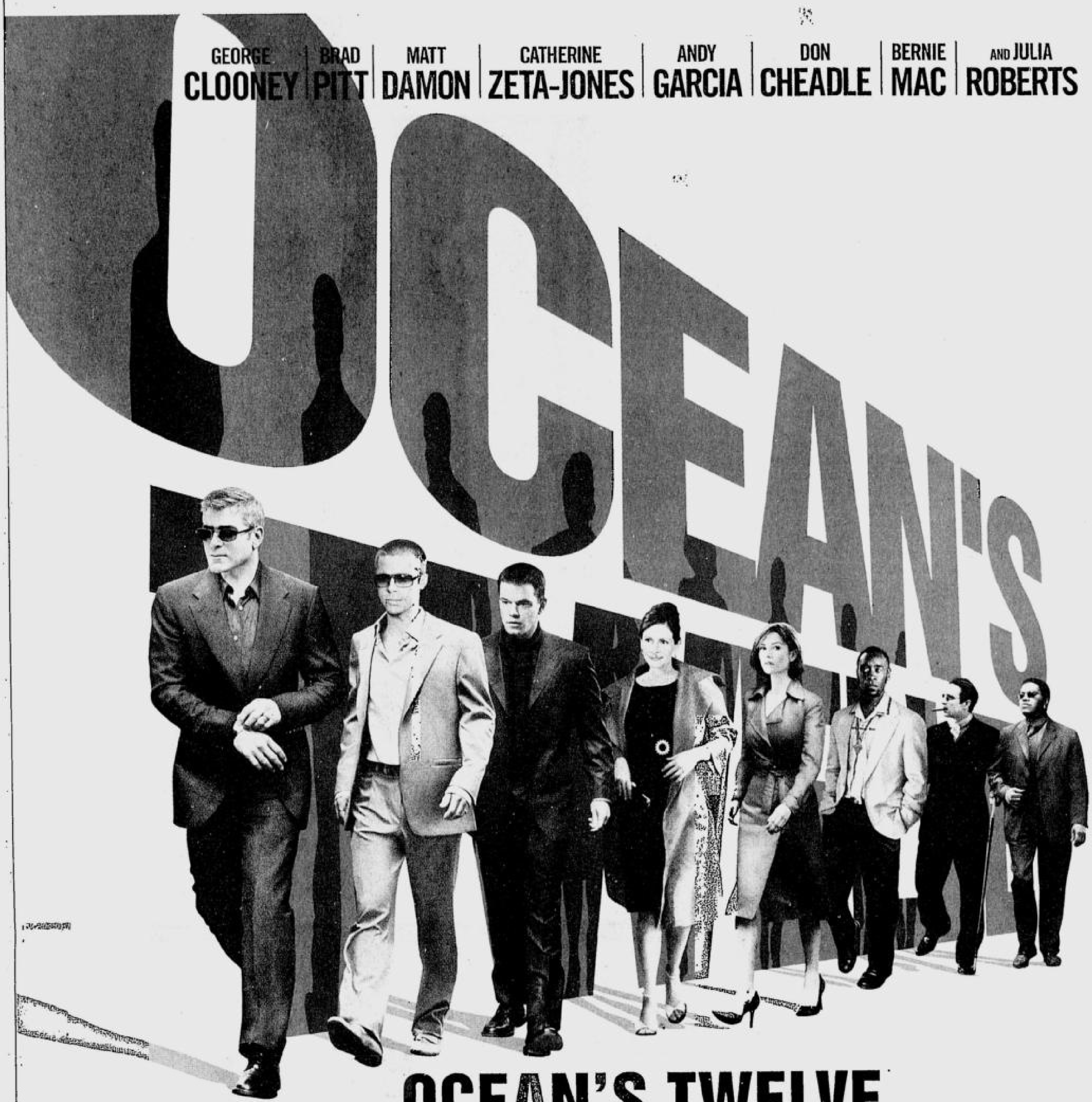

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BERNIE MAC AND JULIA ROBERTS "OCEAN'S TWELVE" CASEY AFFLECK SCOTT CAAN VINCENT CASSEL EDDIE JEMISON WITH CARL REINER AND ELLIOTT GOULD COSTUME DESIGNER MILENA CANONERO
EDITED BY STEPHEN MIRRIONE, A.C.E. PRODUCTION DESIGNER PHILIP MESSINA MUSIC BY DAVID HOLMES CO-PRODUCERS FREDERIC W. BROST GREGORY JACOBS EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS JOHN HARDY SUSAN EKINS AND BRUCE BERMAN
WRITTEN BY GEORGE NOLFI PRODUCED BY JERRY WEINTRAUB DIRECTED BY STEVEN SODERBERGH
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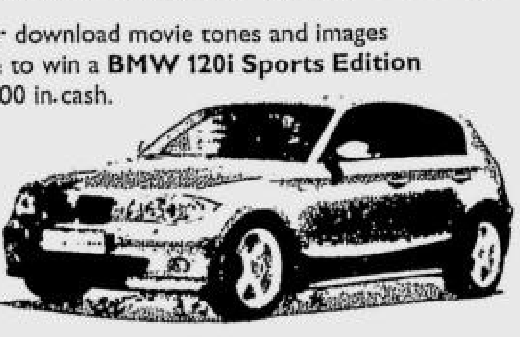
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Caravan	Arthur Lyman	caravan
Cha Cha Cha	Jimmy Luxury	chachacha
Claire De Lune	The Philadelphia Orchestra	clairedelune
Dream Dream Dream	Percy Faith and His Orchestra	dreamdream
Gritty Shaker	David Holmes	grittyshaker
L' Appuntamento	Gianni Ferrio	appuntamento
Moon River	Liberace	moonriver
Spirit in the Sky	Norman Greenbaum	spiritndsky
Take My Breath Away	Berlin	breathaway
Theme from a Summer Place	Percy Faith and His Orchestra	themesummer

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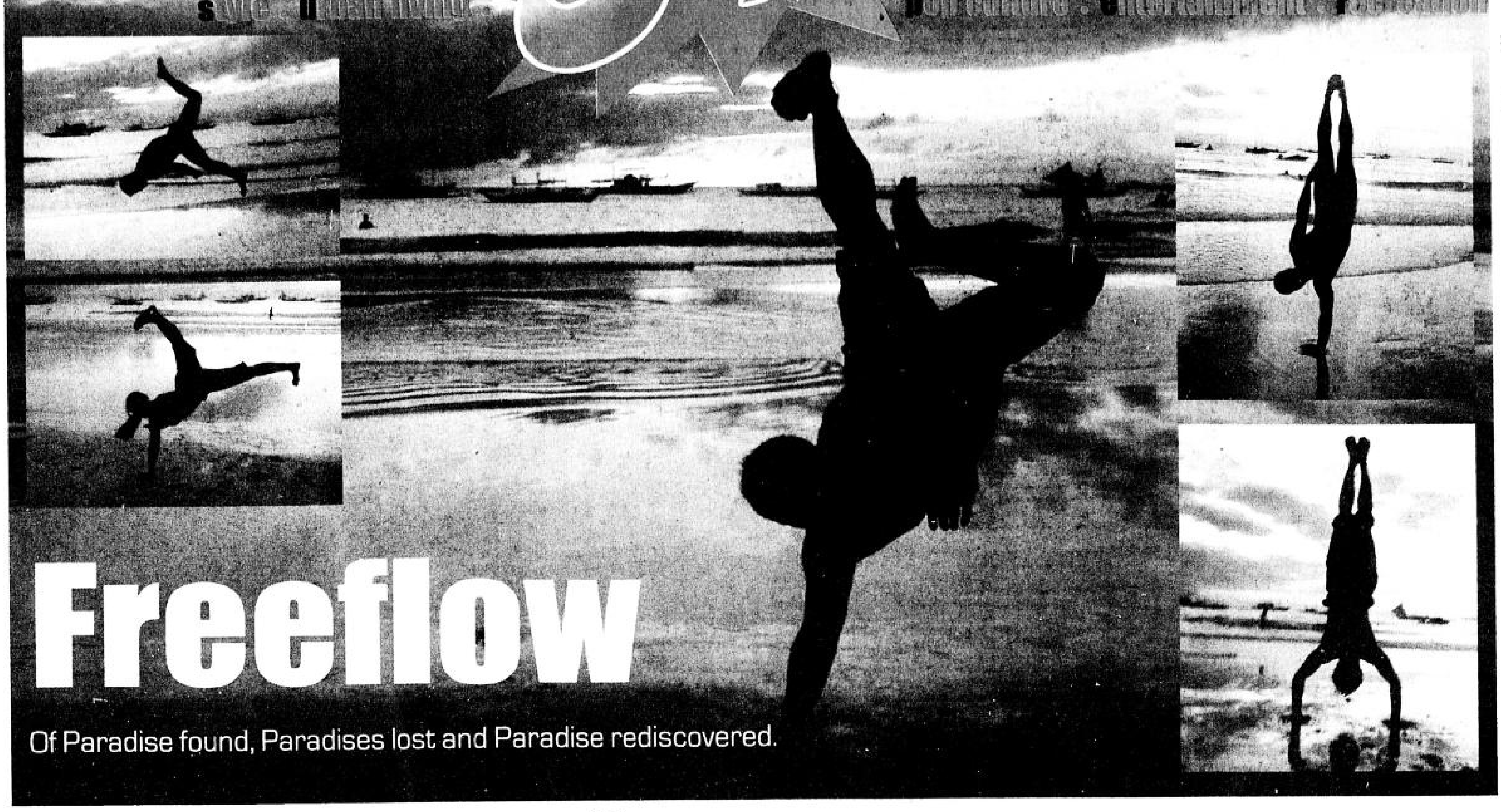


Freeflow

Of Paradise found, Paradises lost and Paradise rediscovered.

Photos by Mon de los Reyes

OUT THE WINDOW

Tals Diaz

TEN SECONDS to go before the last year ebbed and the new year flowed, the peppy host revving up the reggae set at Summer's Place in Boracay said something to the blissful crowd that caught my wave of emoceans. "We're all ready to party? We're all feeling good? That's because we have a beautiful beach!"

Nomad is an island

A beautiful beach indeed was the image painted in my head when I flew alone into what remains as my favorite island in the world, on Christmas Day. Aural fixations of the "The Beach" soundtrack on constant repeat mode drowned out verbal insinuations of some friends back in Manila who called me loopy for choosing solitude over solidarity in stupor during the holidays. I declined generous offerings of wine, song and free *bibingka* to get to Boracay as fast as I could, dump my bags in any little room and traipse along pure shores. It was the perfect setup: a few days to myself in paradise to be chilliterate before friends and familiar faces washed up on the shores in time for the New Year revelry.

Go flow

I believe the best-laid plans in paradise are summed up in the mantra *go with the flow*. I highly recommend going solo around Boracay, you'll never know what new surprise will turn up—like four-month-old bar tabs.

I immediately made friends with some cool Germans who have lived in the island for years, operating a boating operation I dubbed as the Ultimate Booze Cruise, where you'd sail, island hop, lunch and snorkel on the reefs with freeflowing booze at your bidding. By sunset, the Go Boating crew sails back to Nigi Nigi's Bar in time for Happy Hour. (Needless to say, I was so tanked that I sank on land. So much for my pre-planned state of Chillaxation.)

I met Aussie kiteboarders addicted to the waves and winds on the other side of the isle, which is apparently gaining global repute as an outstanding place to learn how to glide and fly. Skim Boarding is likewise fast catching on, so I tried my luck at it with some locals and, well, only ended up skinning my knee on the board. ("Skin Boarding" is more like it.)

I discovered that the authentic sunset-'til-sun-up haven of Café Del Mar Asia, owned by superchill Pinay-Hawaiian Cory, starts Happy Hour early at 4:30 until 7 p.m. I found a little store where I could wear my initials in *Alibata* script. I came across a real-deal swamp worthy of Shrek somewhere in the backroads of "downtown Bora." And, most of all, I affirmed that the best money-saving scheme (at least for me) is to feast on the sumptuous *ihaw-ihaw* peddled along Station Two.

Time and Tsunami

The winds shifted suddenly in Paradise when I caught the first tsunami of bad news from a Belgian beach bum.

I confess it was an eerie feeling—to be tranquil by turquoise seas and yet be unsettled knowing that several shores to the west of my orientation, fellow sun worshippers were hapless victims of Neptune's wrath. How ironic that the Phi Phi islands, the pristine isles where Hollywood cameras filmed DiCaprio sunning his backside for "The Beach," were wiped away in one hellish swell. A cousin of mine was in fact headed there the next day, until he saw his resort on CNN obliterated by the angry tides. I even bumped into an old college friend and his English mates who were headed over to Sri Lanka from the UK and decided to reroute their trip to Boracay instead, lucky enough to have escaped an ill-fated ratio of time and tide.

Thus, it was with supreme irony when, on New Year's Eve, I watched revelers dancing inebriated on coastlines under firelit skies, when I knew that fellow Asians were human flotsam not too far away. How does one tread along the isthmus of sensibility and sensitivity?

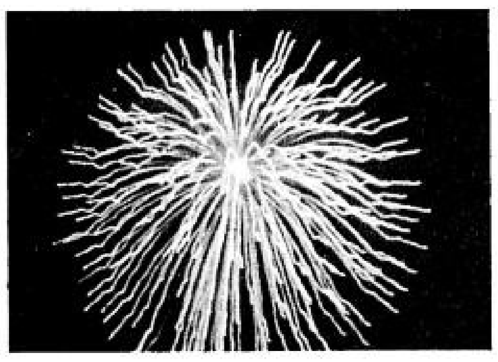
Inner Seas

So what was it that calmed my inner seas?

It was sometime before the toll of midnight, when the inebriates spelling A to Z had not yet taken over the natural high of H_2O. I watched my Brazilian Capoeira teacher, dressed in white, facing the dark sea. Being true to his culture's New Year's customs, he was saying a prayer of thanks, before casting white flowers to the water in offering to Iemanja, the queen of the sea. It was seeing the smiles pasted on my friends' faces as they watched the bright sky flares reflected on the sea. And, most of all, it was knowing that I was in the one and only place in the world that I not only call home but also feel home.

Just as that line on track one of "The Beach" soundtrack says, "it's not where you go, it's what you feel for a moment in your life that lasts forever."

Interested to island hop 'til you drop? E-mail Mike Enderle at Mike@Boracay-boating.com. Fellow waterbums can email the author at inca_orange@yahoo.com



IN PRAISE OF THE SUNSET. Brazilian School of Capoeira kicks high in Boracay

JUST MY IMAGINATION? This may or may not have occurred

CIRQUE DE SABLAY. Fire Zipping heats up the shores

FLOWERS for Iemanja, queen of the sea

Oh caption, my caption!

We'll be back with a vengeance next week. Promizzz!

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ALIEN help from Raymond Lee

THERE is almost nothing that isn't funny.

That has been my life philosophy for the longest time.

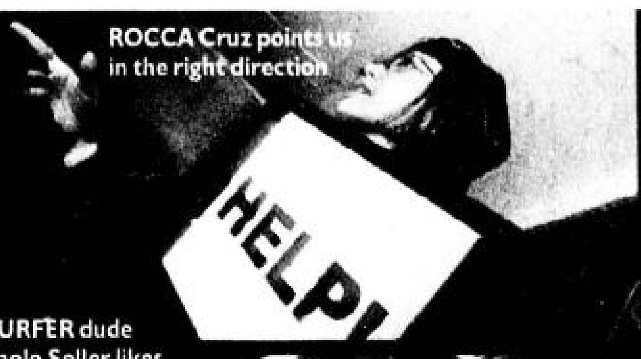
It is still mostly true although as hard as I try, I can't find anything funny about that huge disaster that hit our neighbors.

Hey, it's perfectly all right for you to go out tonight and have some fun. There's no point in feeling guilty about that.

But maybe, later, when you are about to order your next beer or mocha latte, pause for a moment and remind yourself about all those people who probably still don't know what hit them.

Then, take that money you earmarked for that drink and put it in a separate pocket. On Monday, you'll send it to one of the many organizations that are helping those people, OK?

If you do that for me, I'll hereby graciously allow you to order your next drink and I hope you enjoy yourself tonight because it won't help anybody if you feel miserable, too.


ROCCA Cruz points us in the right direction

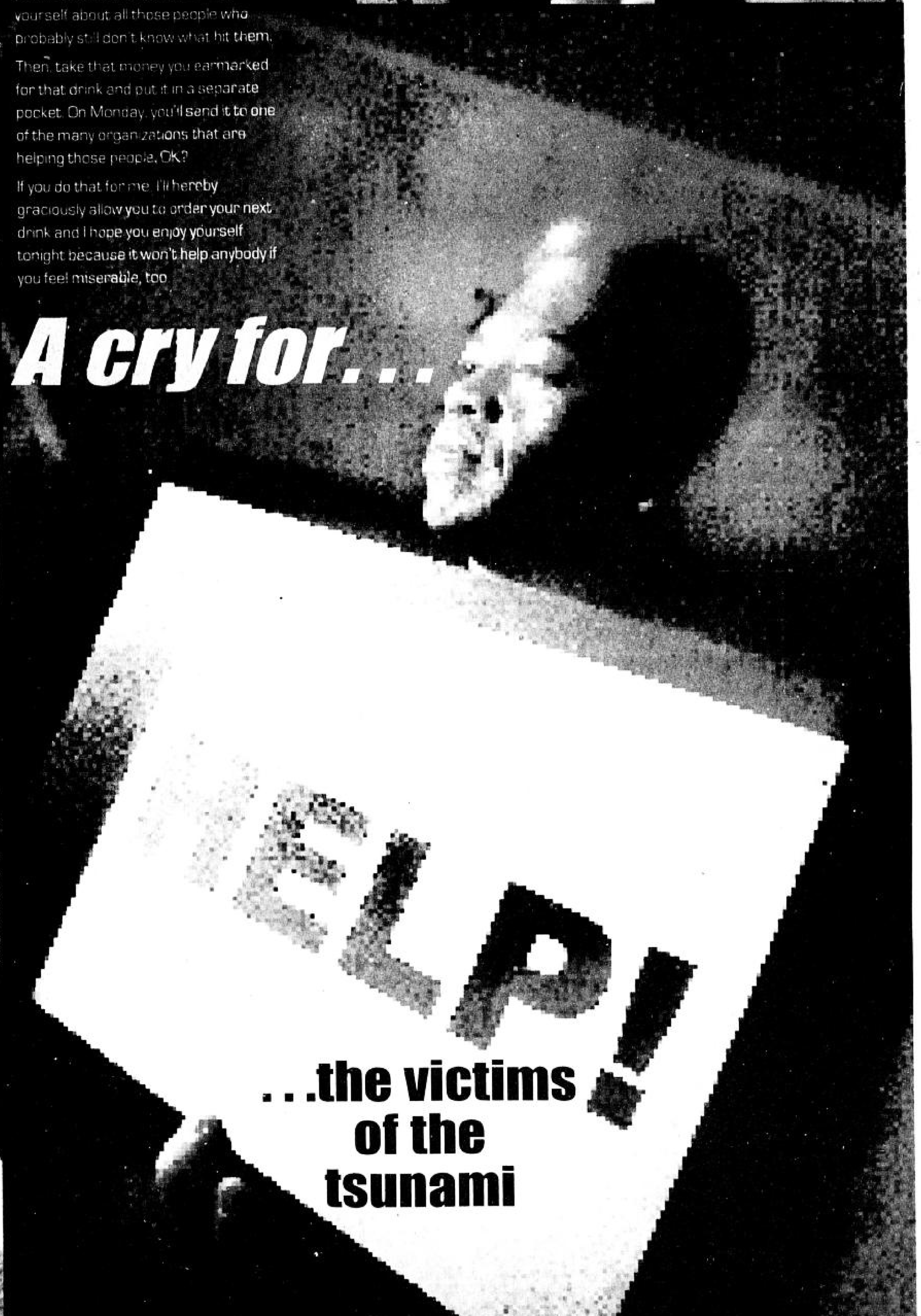
SURFER dude Paolo Soller likes big waves, but not that big

HELP!
es big waves
hat big.

PATRICK Wang is very suspicious of this photographer

A cry for...

...the victims of the tsunami



MARLON puts you into the picture

VERNON Perez is into food help

PELIGRO'S Nikki Ledesma

PELIGRO owners Roman Ripoll and Chris Gonzales could use some help

Jerry Echter is always ready with the helping hand

FASHIONABLE help from Mimi Sanson

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Superfriends

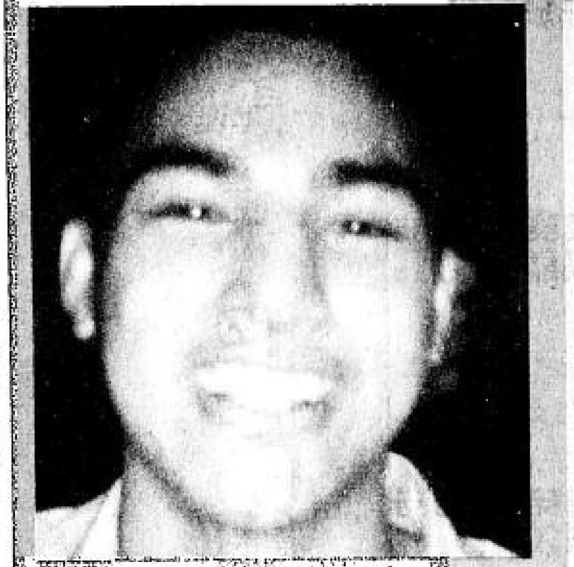
Text and photos by David Milan

Yoshi Uy
Age: 22
Being free is being: In the beach the whole day DRINKING and BOUNCING.
I used to be a prisoner of: My selfish desires
And the person/s who set me free was: The one greater than me
E-mail me at: yosh_uy@yahoo.com

Bibai Gaisano
Age: 21
Being free is being: Selfless, knowing everything you do is for the good of others. Not holding grudges against anyone.
I used to be a prisoner of: Sadness, negative thoughts.
And the person/s who set me free was: My new found faith in Christ.
E-mail me at: bibai_gaisano@yahoo.com

Janina Garcia
Age: 18
Being free is being: HAPPY!
I used to be a prisoner of: Beer
And the thing that set me free was: New Year
The things that make me feel free are: When I'm with friends
E-mail me at: jaja7285@yahoo.com

Herbie Natividad
Age: 19
I used to be a prisoner of: Hatred/Anger
And the person/s who set me free was: It's not a person but forgiveness...
The thing that makes me feel free is: Myself
E-mail me at: Herbnatividad@yahoo.com



Gio Bote
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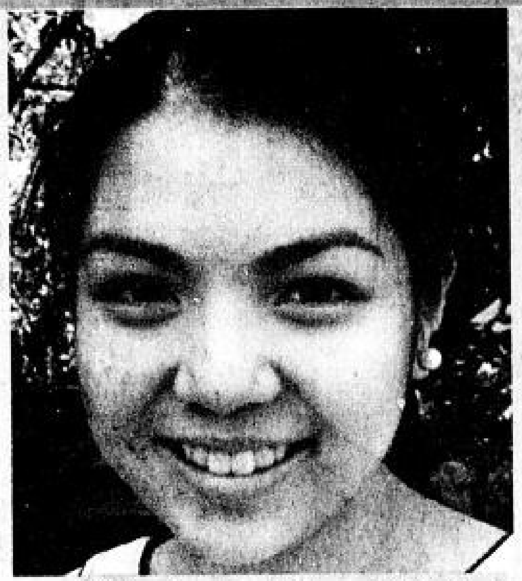
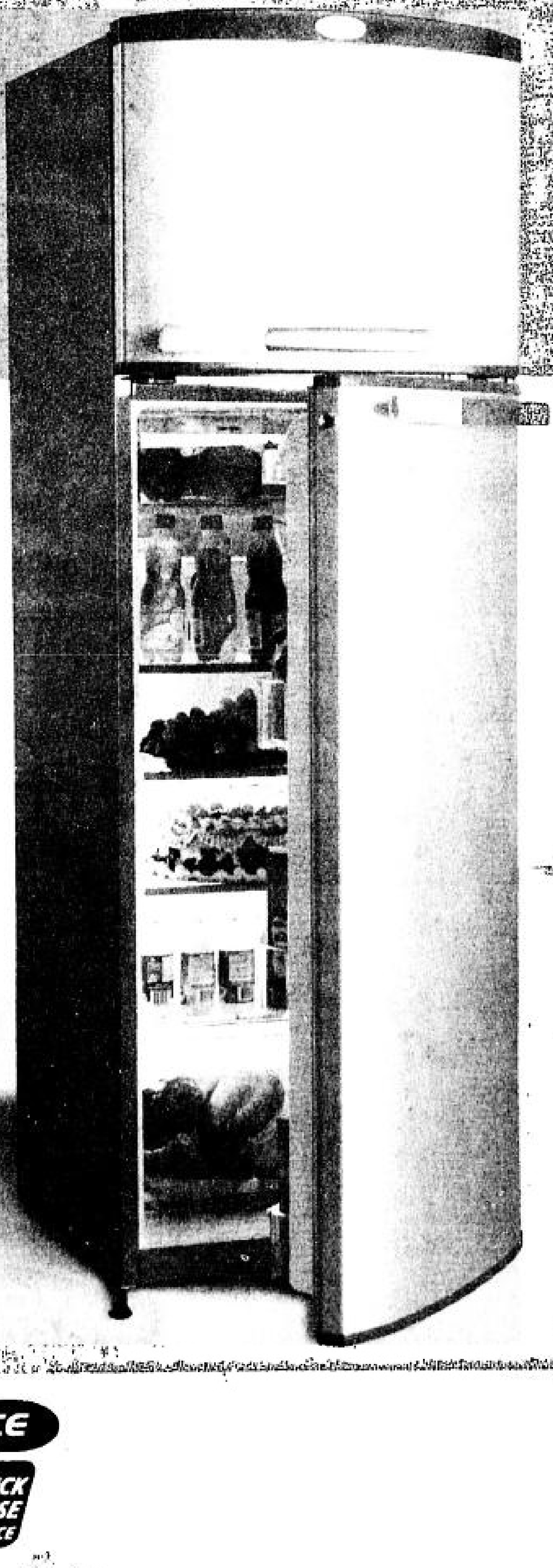


Ivette Gavieres
Age: 20
I used to be a prisoner of: Being conscious of what other people would say
And the person/s who set me free was: Myself!
The things that make me feel free are: Everything around me
E-mail me at: ivette_gavieres@yahoo.com

Anna Bernal
[illegible]

Meigan Butalid
Age: 20
I used to be a prisoner of: Insecurity
And the person/s who set me free was: God and my family
The things that make me feel free are: My loved ones
E-mail me at: meigan_butalid@yahoo.com



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The new Whirlpool Rhapsody No Frost refrigerator.
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The new Rhapsody refrigerator with 360 degree surround cool, all around cooling... all around your refrigerator.

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Also available:
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WBM 11Q - 11 cu.ft., No Frost
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Nokia 3120*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Nokia 3220*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Nokia 6230*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Nokia 6260*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Nokia 6600*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Nokia 7610*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Motorola C375	FREE	FREE	80% OFF	40% OFF	30% OFF	30% OFF
Motorola C650*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
SMART Amazing Phone 2*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
Sony Ericsson K500i*	FREE	FREE	60% OFF	30% OFF	20% OFF	25% OFF
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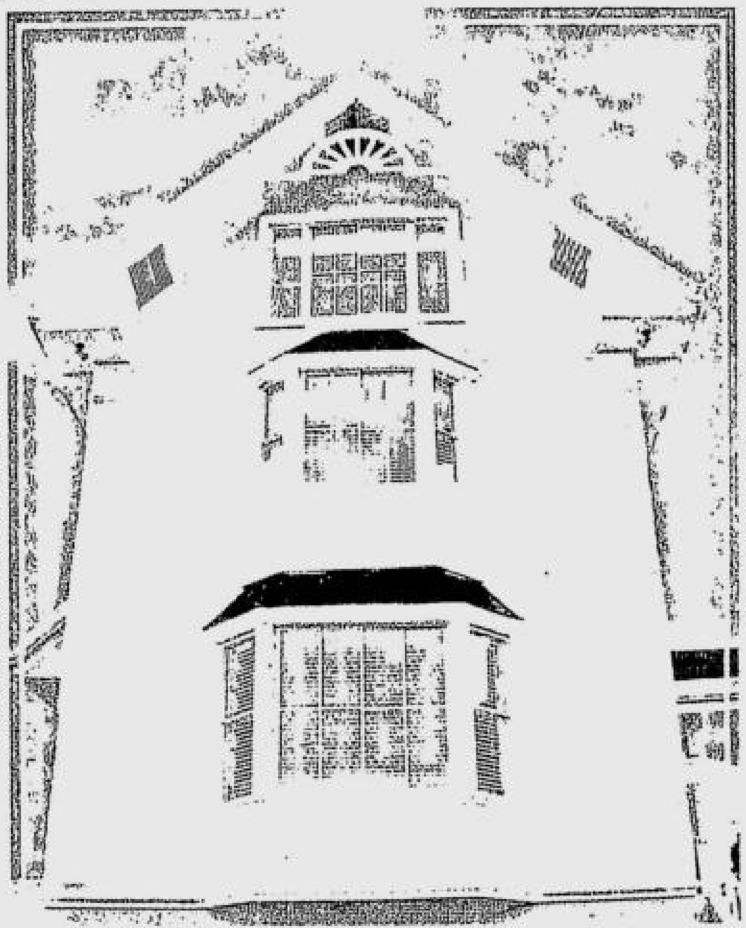
PROPERTY PREVIEW



Old world elegance and soft pastels add to the charm of the Victorianne Duetto.

The Heart of San Francisco Beats at Brittany Bay

The famous American writer William Saroyan once said, "No city invites the heart to come to life as San Francisco does. Arrival in San Francisco is an experience in living."

Inspired by this, property development maverick Brittany Corporation crafted the lifescapes of La Posada, Victorianne and Viera at Brittany Bay into that of Victorian San Francisco. Interspersed with commercial establishments, it makes for a vibrant San Francisco life at Brittany Bay.

La Posada offers single detached units perfect for those who have a measure of success and want to enjoy living in the luxury of comfort and style.

Continued on page 2...

The Posadas Family: A Legacy in Community Development

The Posadas family has been known for their pioneering acts in developing communities south of Manila. It has been the family's life-long vision to bring about a sense of urban renewal to their large expanse of land in what is now known as Sucat.

It started in 1969 when the Posadas family, through the initiative of Estela Marfori Posadas, pioneered the development of residential communities. It gave birth to Posadas Village, from which their other successful real estate developments stemmed.

Sharing a common vision, Brittany Corporation works hand-in-hand with the Posadas family to build a community inspired by one of the world's greatest destinations: San Francisco. The result is Brittany Bay, an ideal setting for a leisurely life where everything one needs is close by.

Now as the neo-Victorian inspired lifescapes of Brittany Bay rapidly takes shape, the Posadas family could only look forward to further developments in the area. With this success adding to the family's history, one can say that the legacy lives on.

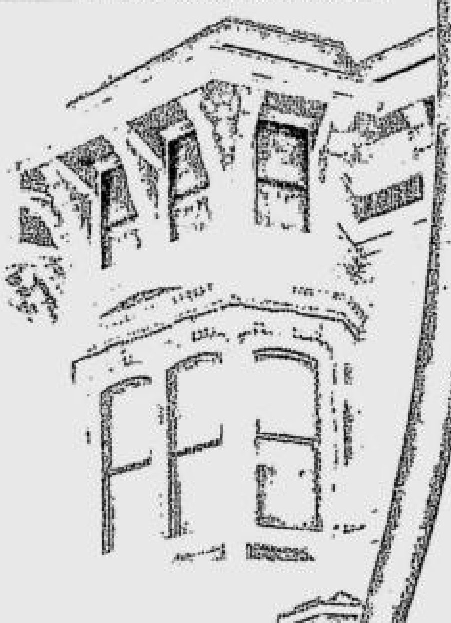
THE VALUES THAT RAISE THE QUALITY OF LIFE:

PRIVACY

Privacy is a premium at Viera. It is given utmost importance. That's why we designed only an average of six units for each floor. No crowding. You can enjoy the sunrise from your own balcony or read a book in blissful privacy.

STYLE

Living at Viera means living in neo-Victorian style. The quaint magnificence of San Francisco can be seen in the elegant facades, the bay windows and other design details.



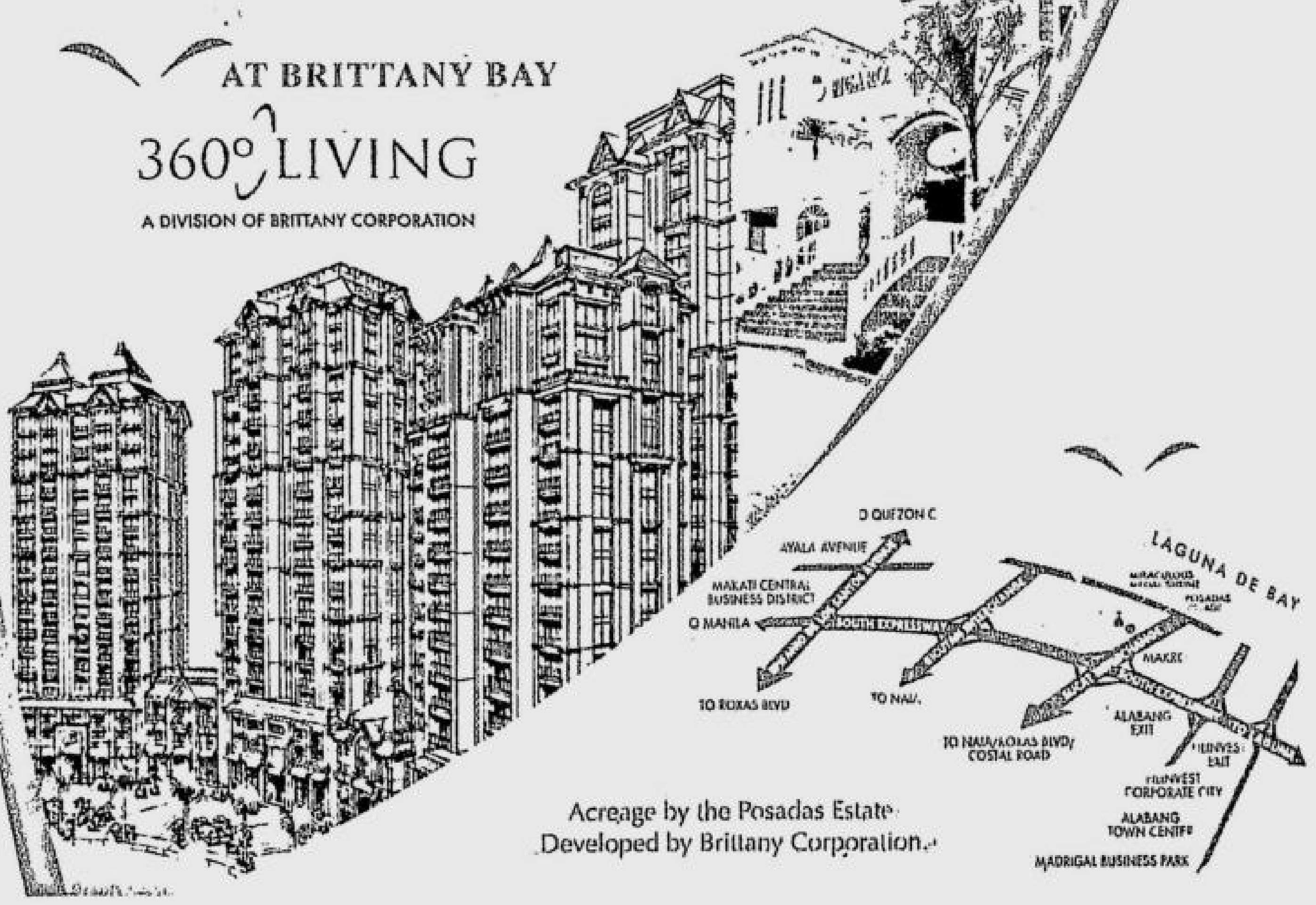
COMMUNITY

Viera is set within the community of neighborhoods of Brittany Bay. It is right alongside La Posada, Victorianne, the cafes, shops and restaurants. You have the ideal venue for interaction, for getting together with friends and neighbors at your favorite places that is now close to home.

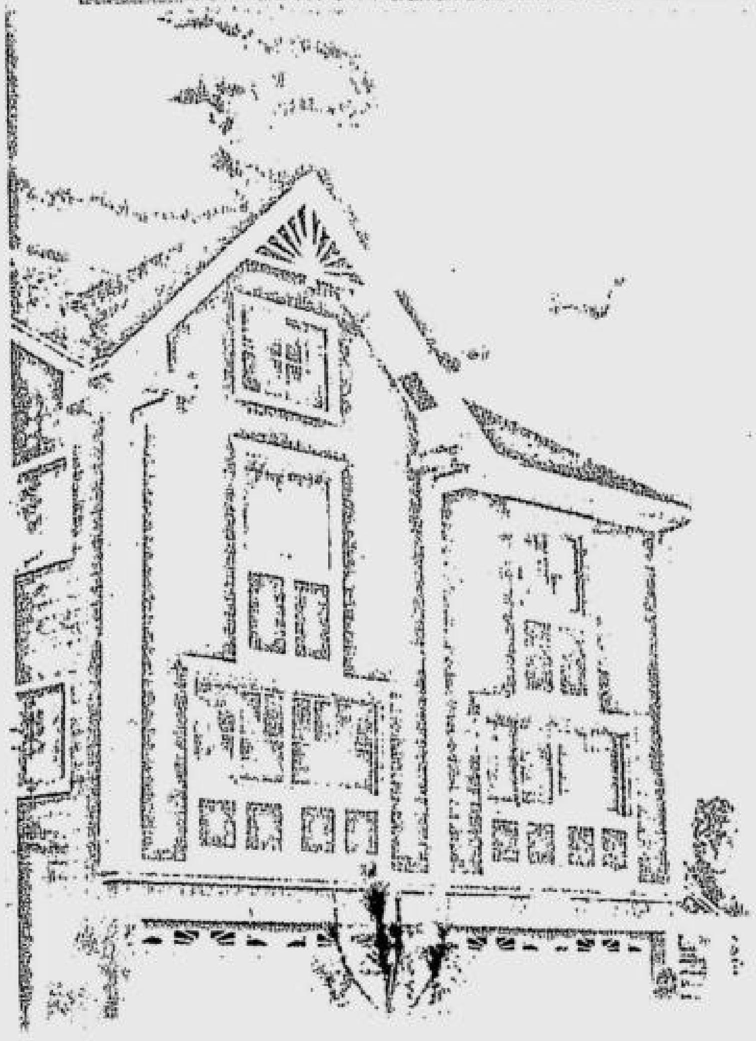
Get a Property Preview and reserve your unit now.

Call 842 1251 • 842 1360 • 850 2868

AT BRITTANY BAY
360° LIVING
A DIVISION OF BRITTANY CORPORATION



Acreage by the Posadas Estate
Developed by Brittany Corporation.



The Victorianne Quadrille echoes San Francisco's signature "postcard row".

Continued from page 1...

Victorianne takes inspiration from the famous "postcard row" in Alamo Square, San Francisco. Ms. Jing Serrano, President of Brittany Corporation further explains, "This is evident in the charming neo-Victorian design of the Duettos and Quadrilles–soft pastel colors, bay windows, flat canopies and distinctive roof shingles." Strolling along the brick-laden path actually feels like being in San Francisco. And with Viera soon rising, the quaintly magnificent San Francisco feel of the community is further heightened.

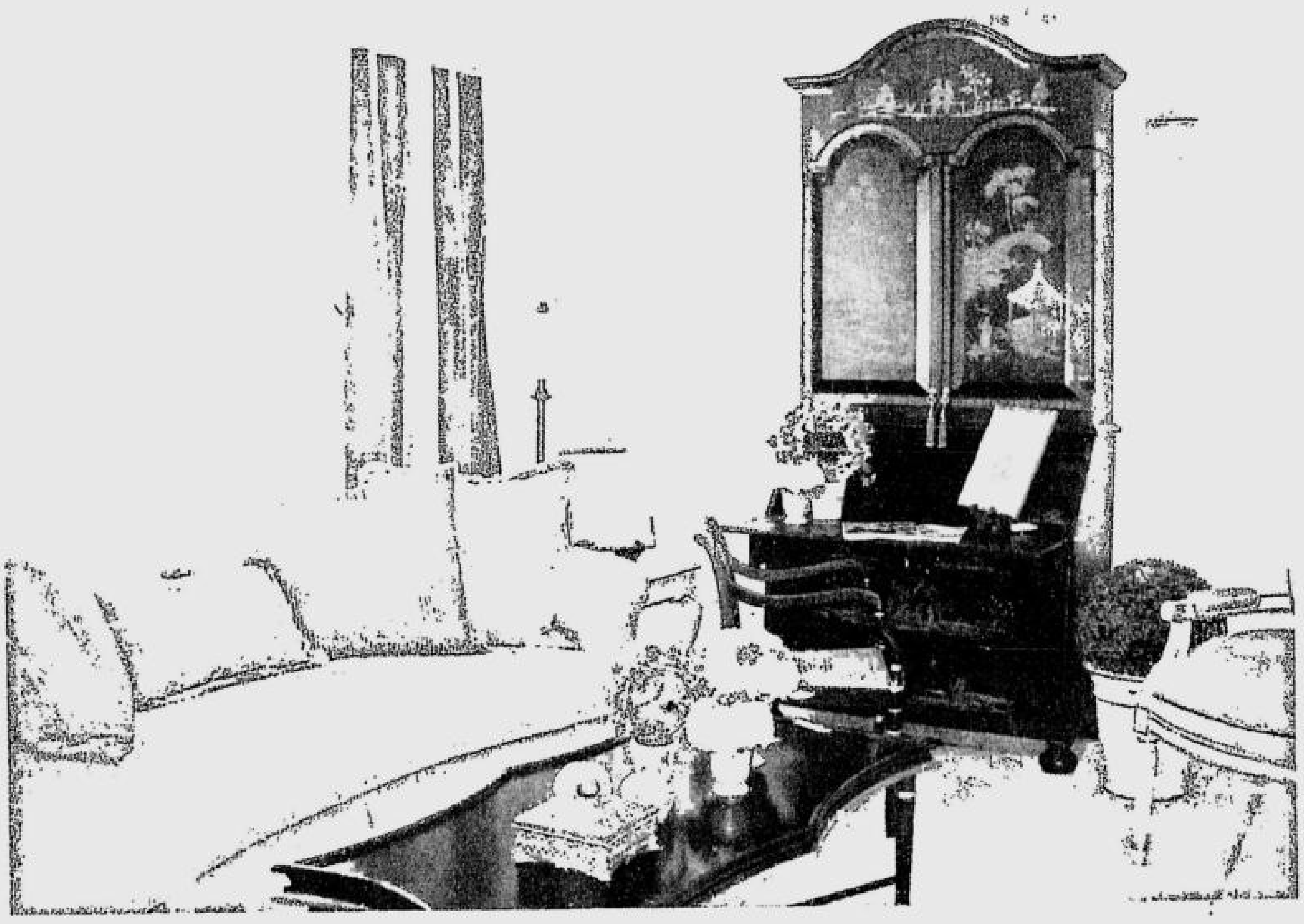
Viera is the first foray into mid-rise condominiums by 360° Living, a division of Brittany Corporation. Viera is guided by 360° Living's 5-pillar philosophy of innovation, intelligent space planning, built-in flexibility, comfort within reach and rooms with a view. The result is a mid-rise development that values what you value most: privacy, style and community. Cherish intimate moments in the privacy of your own living space. Live in a stylish mid-rise that takes its inspiration from the colorful palates of Victorian San Francisco. Meet up with friends from neighboring La Posada and Victorianne at your favorite bistro. As developments progress, you can soon go window shopping at establishments that are just a short walk away.

> ***"Viera is the address of choice, an in-city dwelling where everything you need is close by."***

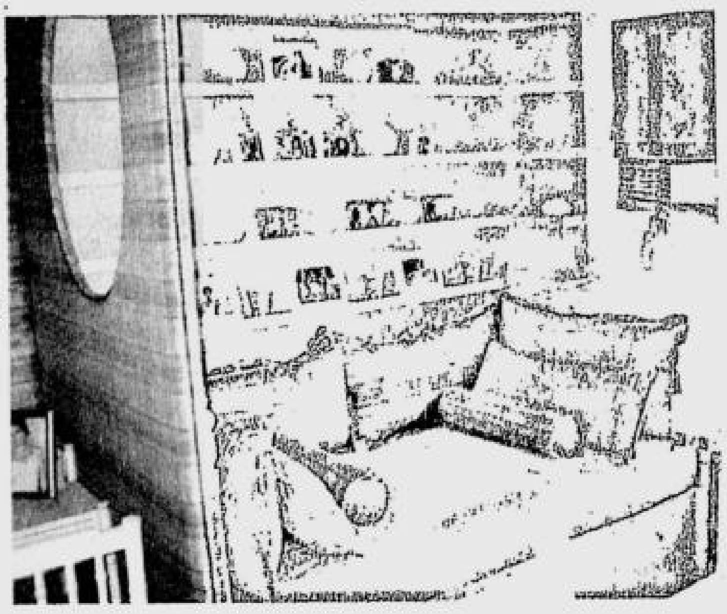
According to Ms. Mary Lee Sadiasa, Division Head of 360° Living, "Viera is the address of choice for upwardly mobile professionals and young families looking for an in-city dwelling where everything they need is close by. San Francisco won't be San Francisco without its leisure spots. Similarly at Brittany Bay, restaurants, bars, and bistros will intersperse with the residential towers to offer a pulsating nightlife. Start the night with dinner at a bistro, then hop off to a nearby bar for a glass of wine or two while an acoustic band plays your songs. Then cap the night off with a capuccino at a cafe and perhaps stay on and witness the breathtaking sunrise over Laguna lake.

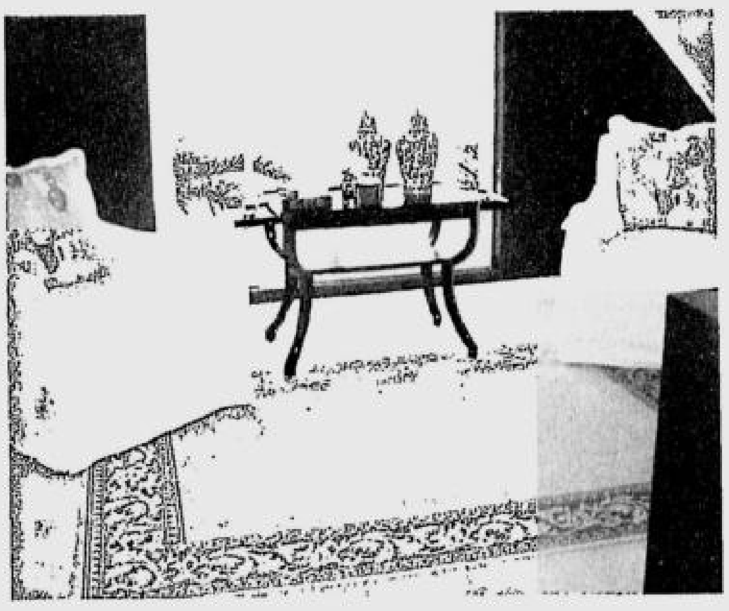
> ***"San Francisco won't be San Francisco without its leisure spots. Similarly at Brittany Bay, restaurants, bars, and bistros will intersperse with the residential towers to offer a pulsating nightlife."***

The heart of San Francisco pulsates at Brittany Bay to create an idyllic setting for a leisurely life. It promises lifestyles that are enhanced, brought to an even better, higher quality. Small wonder that you'll soon find your own heart beating with the lifescapes of Brittany Bay.



Ivy and Cynthia Almario of Atelier Almario, known for their residential interior work, utilized their familiarity of Victorian San Francisco to design the Quadrille's interior. As it is in San Francisco's homes, dining and living rooms are warm, with hues of persimmon, beige and accents of gold and English black. Furniture is overscaled but still right for moving around comfortably The bedroom, in contrast, are cast in cool colors. Overall, the feel is elegant yet inviting.





The new Victorianne quadrille model home welcomes you to get a feel of the San Francisco pulse at Brittany Bay.

A Whole New World of Quaint Magnificence Nearby

You'd think you were in San Francisco. This is how one feels when going to Brittany Bay. The semblance is unmistakable. You walk on brick-laden paths passing by Victorian-inspired homes in soft pastel colors, with roof shingles, grooved wall treatments, balconies and porches with bracket design elements. Interspersed with these homes are shops, bars and restaurants making for a lively scene from morning till night.

Fountains and greenery will soon find their way around Brittany Bay, making for a pleasant stroll.

The design of Brittany Bay is is guided by Brittany Corporation's philosophy for creating properties. As Ms. Jing Serrano, President of Brittany Corporation puts it, "We create uniquely themed lifescapes inspired by the quaint magnificence of the world's best destinations… this is what sets our developments apart, and it's something we apply with each and every property."

Half a World away, the Spanish Steps in Rome serve as guiding inspiration for the walkways of Brittany Bay.

The quaint character of Brittany Bay is seen in the details. In the design of the bay windows. In the multitude of colors. In the kind of steps and walkways. Its magnificence is in the grand way the San Francisco character is applied across the whole development. At Brittany Bay, it's like being in a whole new world that's right nearby.

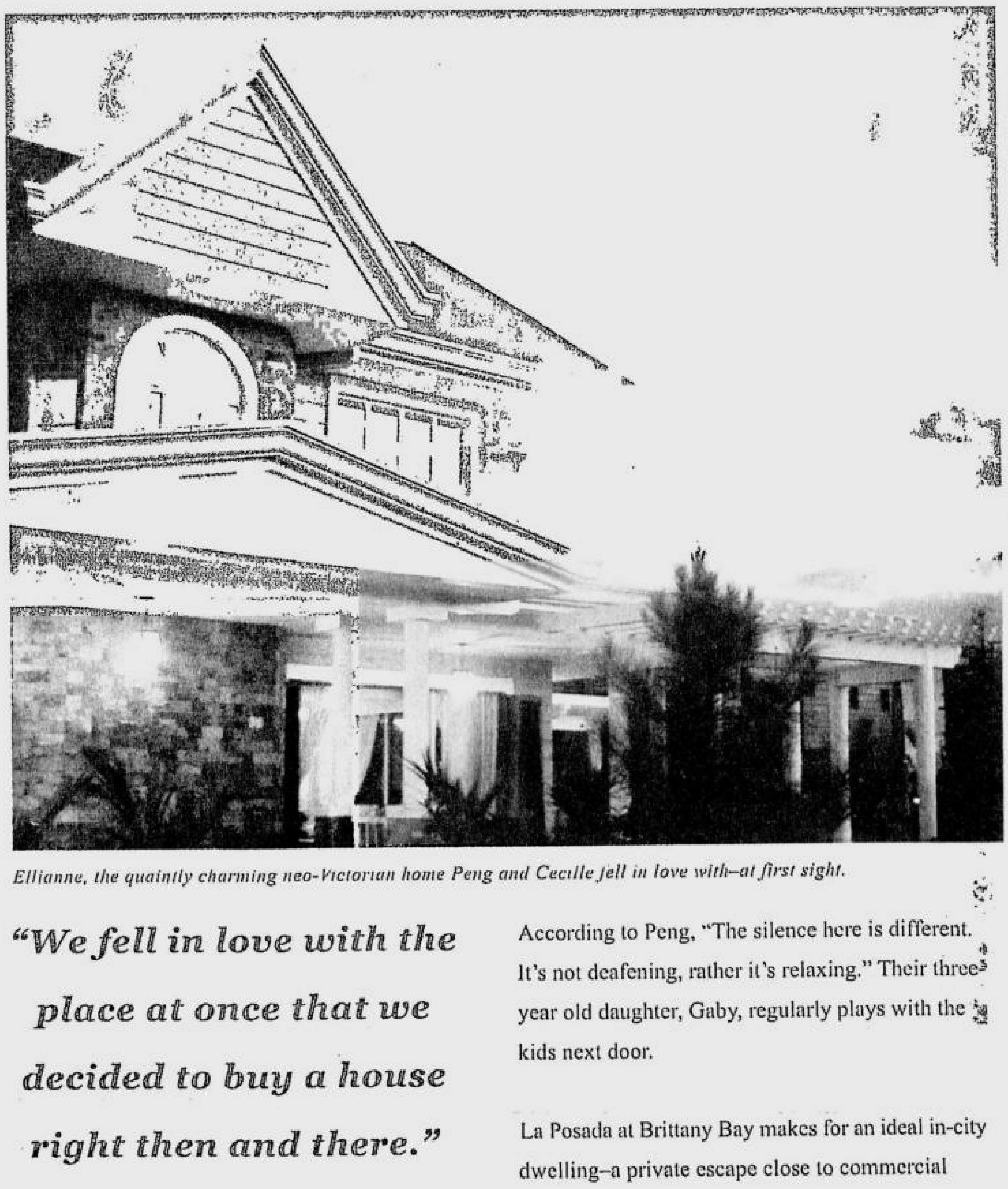
> *"We create uniquely themed lifescapes… this is what sets our developments apart. and it's something we apply with each and every property."*

Couple Falls in Love at First Glance

Imagine driving home after a long day's work and wishing nothing more than just to sit at the porch with the cool breeze melting your worries away. Then you drive through your neighbors' high walls and as you enter your cramped apartment you start to think, "What if we move out?"

That's exactly what Peng and Cecille Perez did. "We wanted a place that's near Alabang and Makati, so we went to subdivisions in Parañaque," Cecille says. Frustrated with the properties they visited, the couple headed for home. "Then I saw the billboard of La Posada and asked Peng to drop by the sales office and inquire. We fell in love with the place at once that we decided to buy a house right then and there," Cecille explains.

A few months later, their Victorian-inspired home at La Posada paved the way for a life renewed and re-invigorated. "We feel so secure at La Posada that we opted not to fence the façade of our house," Cecil says. They love their new home so much that according to Cecille, "We just prefer staying indoors. It's so comfortable here."



Ellianne, the quaintly charming neo-Victorian home Peng and Cecille fell in love with–at first sight.

> *"We fell in love with the place at once that we decided to buy a house right then and there."*

They wake up to mornings of breathtaking sunrises over the Sierra Madre mountains. At night, Peng takes his coffee at the porch enjoying the cool breeze from Laguna de Bay.

According to Peng, "The silence here is different. It's not deafening, rather it's relaxing." Their three-year old daughter, Gaby, regularly plays with the kids next door.

La Posada at Brittany Bay makes for an ideal in-city dwelling–a private escape close to commercial establishments and business districts. One couldn't agree more when Cecille says, "We made the right choice. We simply love it here."

Brittany Bay Rides on the San Francisco High

There's no better way to describe the culture scene of San Francisco than these last few lines of a song by songwriter, Jerry Holland: "The streets are filled with music and alive with style and light...everyone wearin' smiles on a San Francisco High."

This ballad could well be an ode to the commercial area at Brittany Bay. Designed to emulate the colors, the life of San Francisco, a bounty of restaurants, cafes, bars and bistros intersperse with the residential areas. According to Ms. Nova Noval, Corporate Communications Head of Brittany Corporation, "Brittany Bay would become an oasis for weary urbanites seeking to unwind in a neo-Victorian environment that's right nearby."

FIGARO
Dencio's

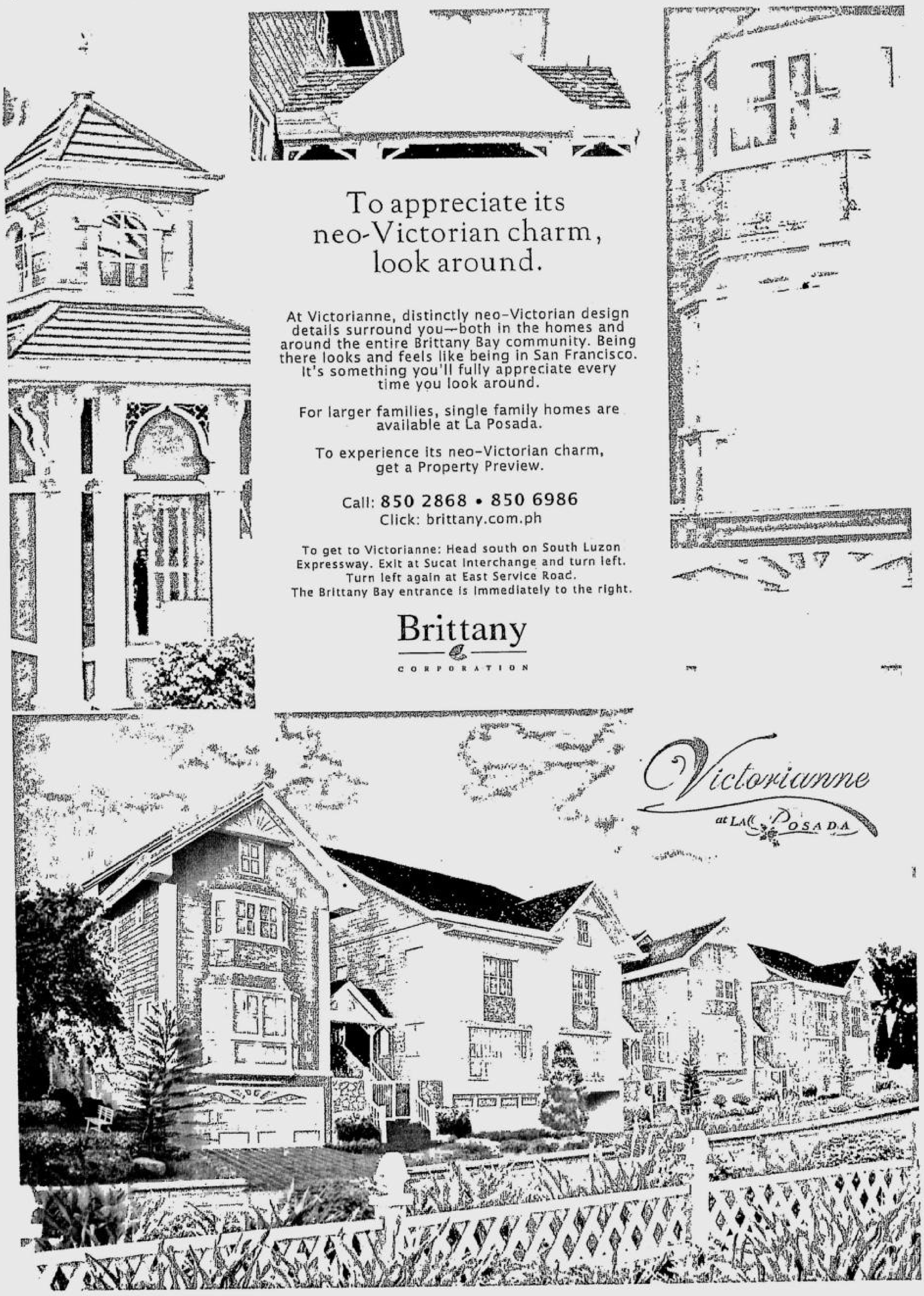
Dencio's and Figaro light up the night life at Brittany Bay in Sucat.

As Mr. Martin Lorenzo, President of Dencio's, sees it, "The location is ideal – it's built within the community." Ms. Ros Juan, Communications Officer of Figaro adds, "The buildings are well-designed, it combines form and function perfectly. It's your favorite Figaro in an exciting new location."

And so it goes that in barely five months of operation, Dencio's and Figaro have become a destination for professionals in the area. According to Mr. Lorenzo, "We switched on our sign on opening night and people just kept coming in large groups." Ms. Juan agrees, "Business has been good. We close late because we sometimes cater to our diners who stay until 3 a.m."

With the developments in the area, Dencio's and Figaro agree that it's good news for business. As Ms. Juan says, "There's a symbiotic relationship between Brittany Bay residents and the various establishments therein. Once everything is set-up, it will be an ideal community for everyone."

Two other restaurants will be opening soon. With this and other upcoming developments, one can only expect an even better ride on the San Francisco high at Brittany Bay.



To appreciate its
neo-Victorian charm,
look around.

At Victorianne, distinctly neo-Victorian design details surround you—both in the homes and around the entire Brittany Bay community. Being there looks and feels like being in San Francisco. It's something you'll fully appreciate every time you look around.

For larger families, single family homes are available at La Posada.

To experience its neo-Victorian charm, get a Property Preview.

Call: 850 2868 • 850 6986
Click: brittany.com.ph

To get to Victorianne: Head south on South Luzon Expressway. Exit at Sucat Interchange and turn left. Turn left again at East Service Road. The Brittany Bay entrance is immediately to the right.

Brittany
CORPORATION

Victorianne
at LA POSADA

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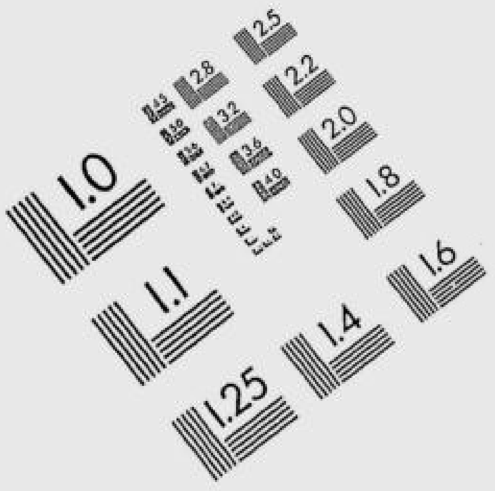
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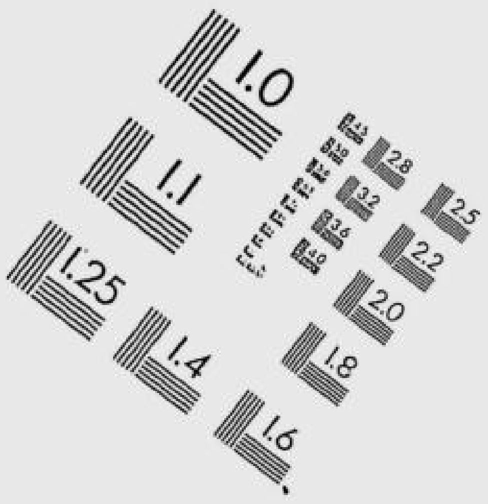
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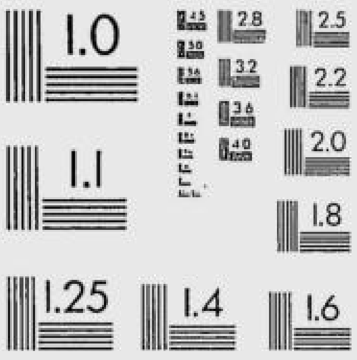
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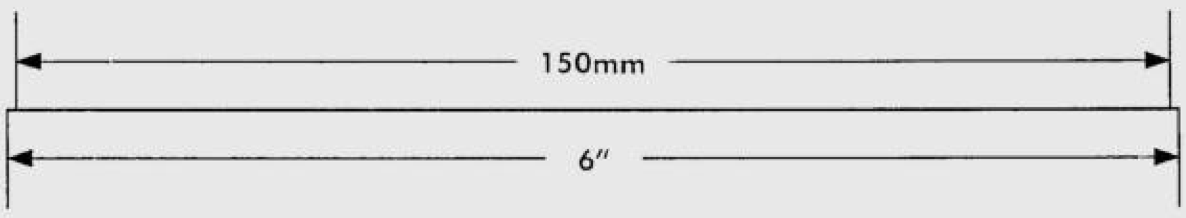

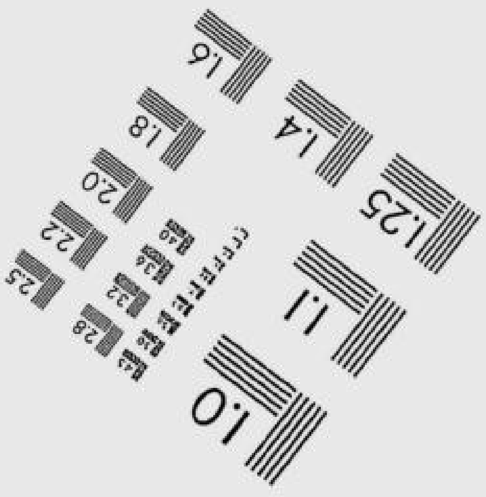
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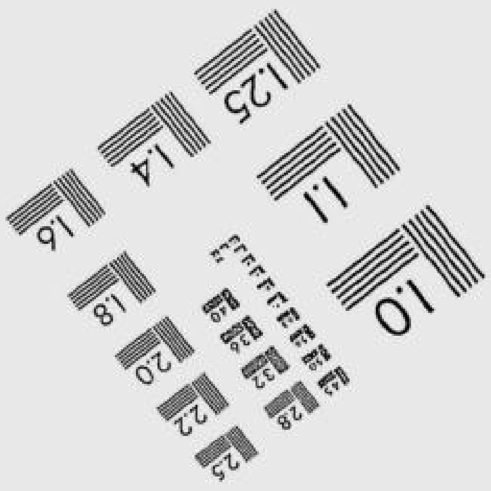
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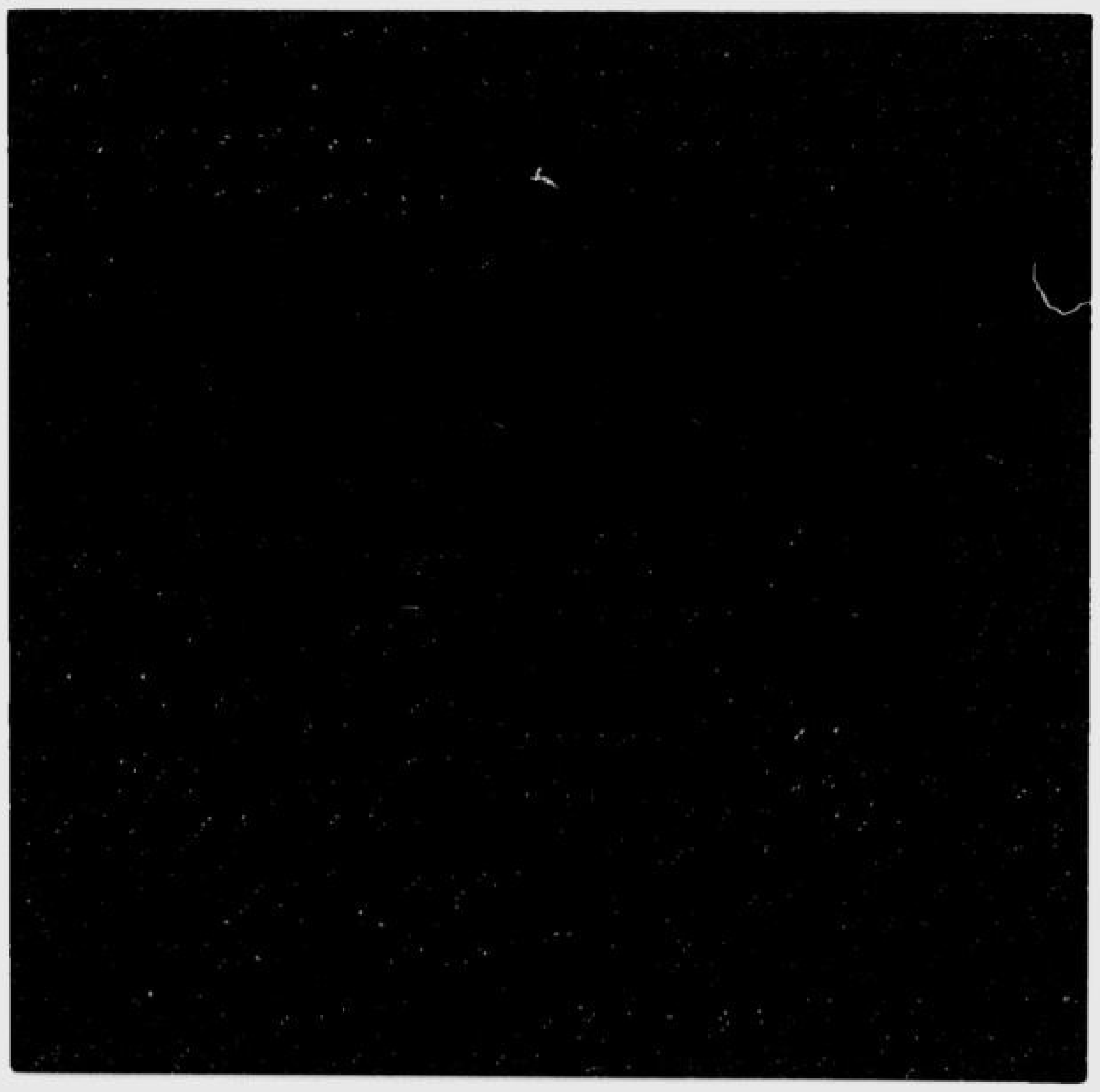

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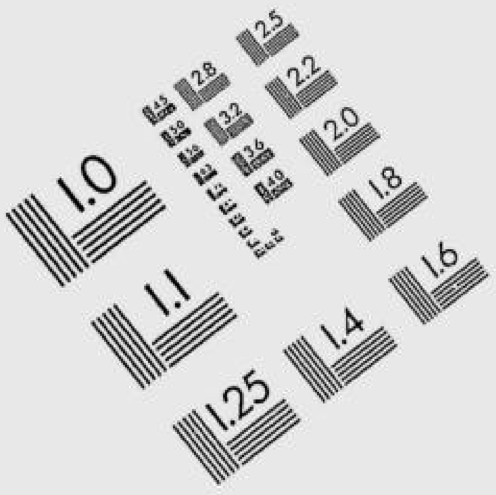
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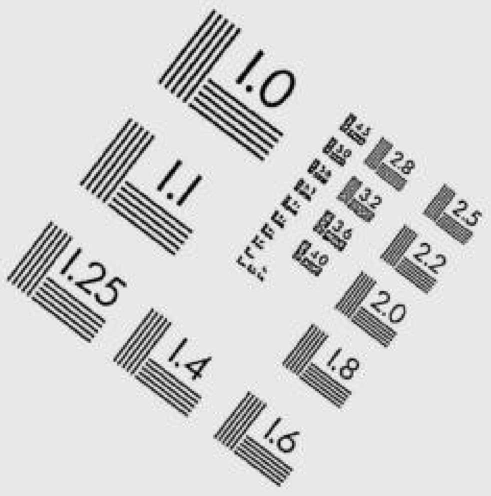
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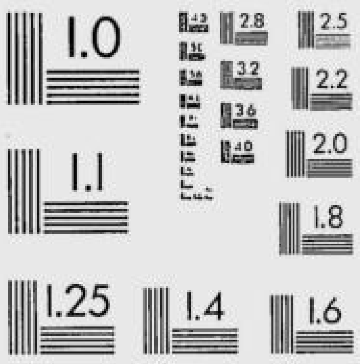
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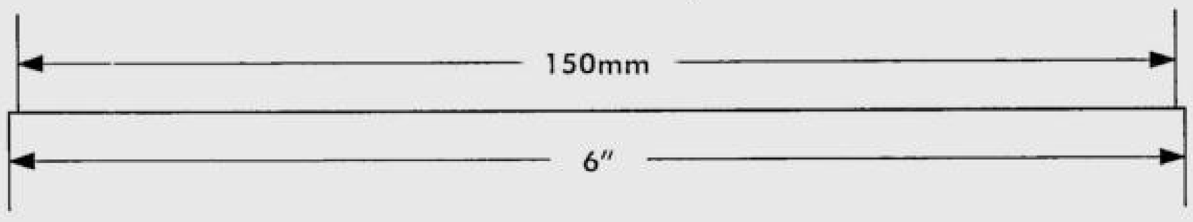

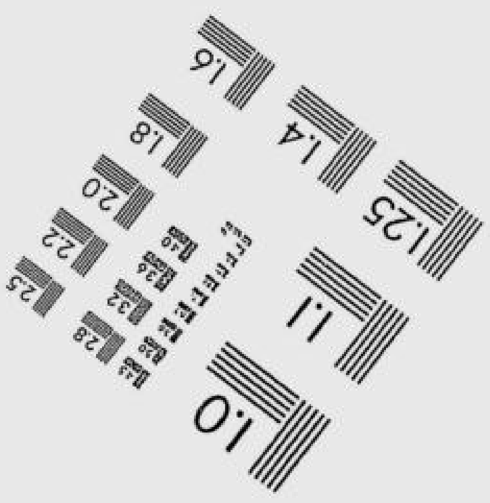
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1653 East Main Street
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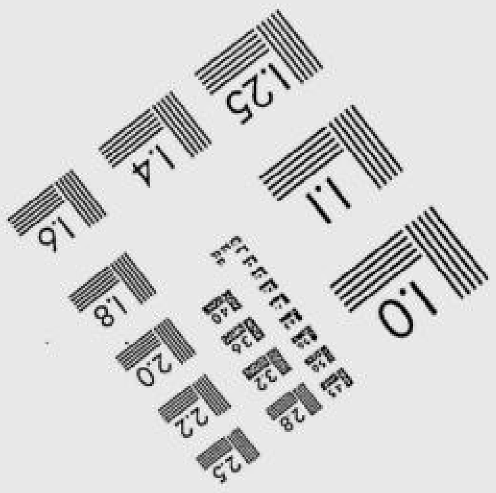
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